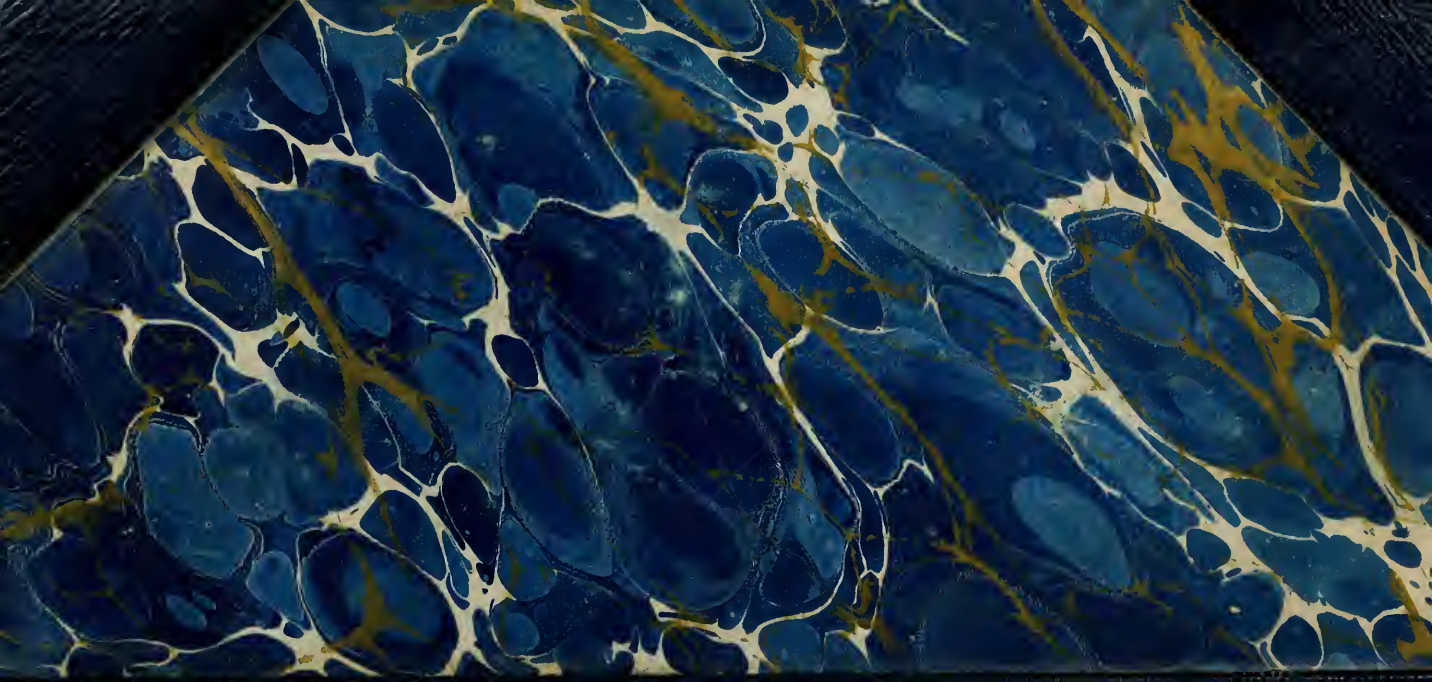
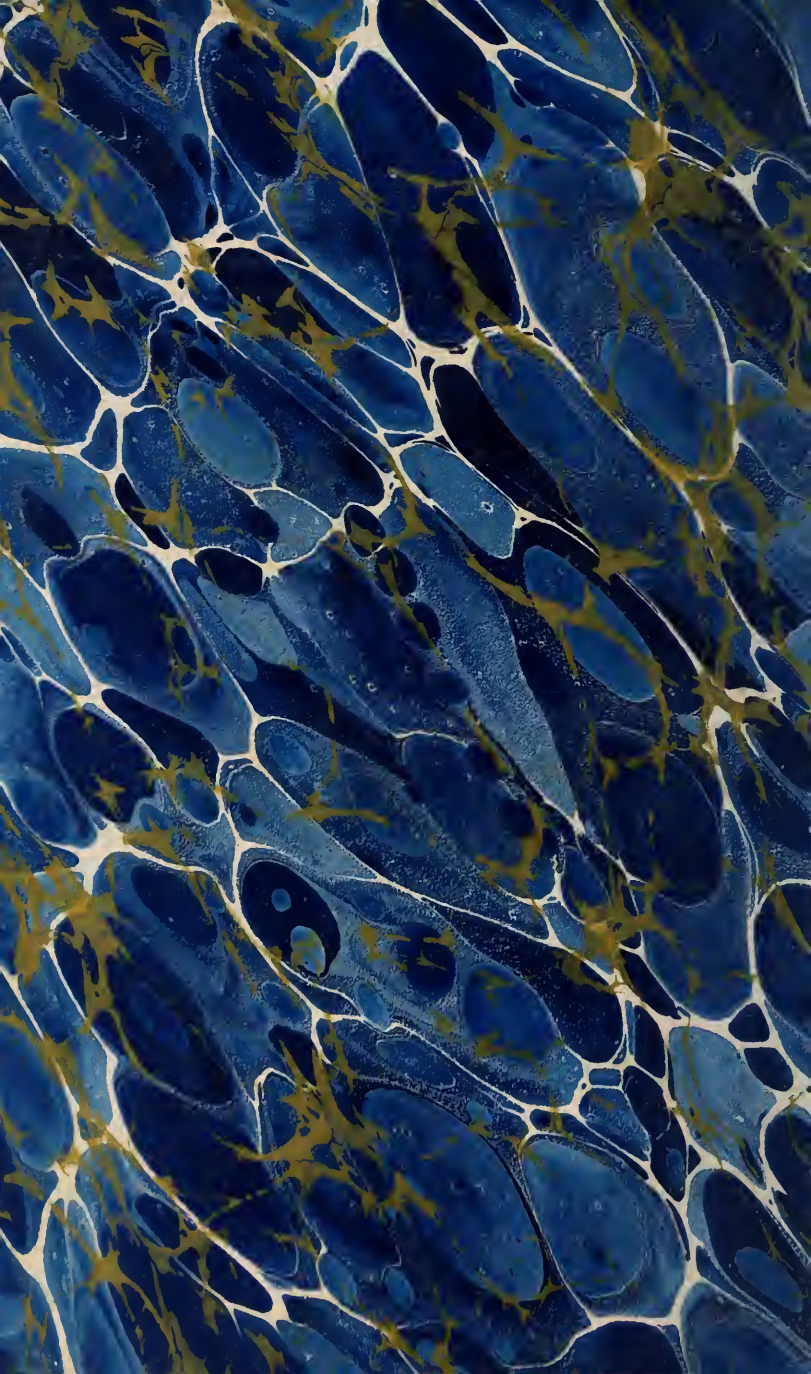
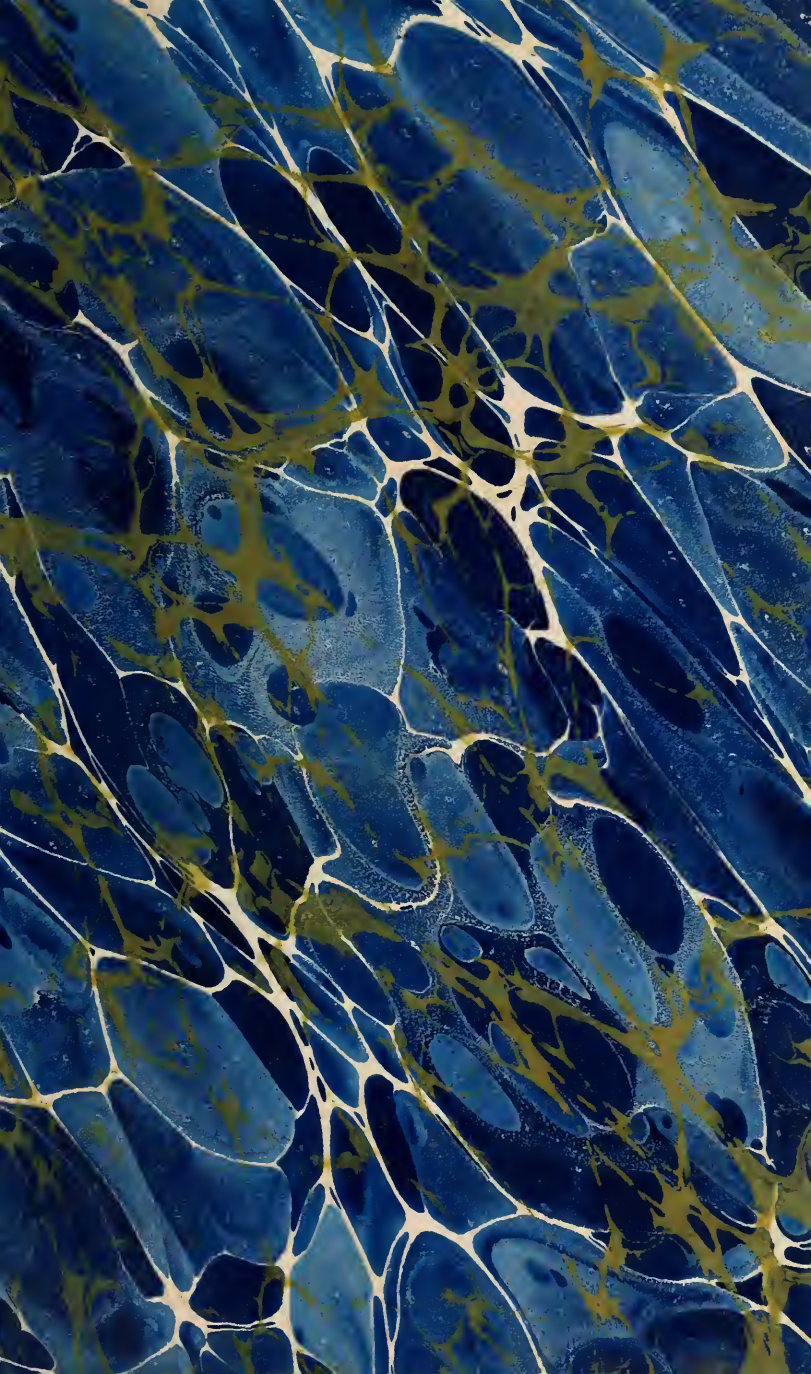


UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY
A A 0 0 1 3 9 9 6 9 9 2 8





(3) Vol. Set

75—

MARSTON;

OR, THE

SOLDIER AND STATESMAN.

VOL. I.

LONDON:
GILBERT & RIVINGTON, PRINTERS,
ST. JOHN'S SQUARE.

MARSTON:

OR, THE

SOLDIER AND STATESMAN.

BY THE

REV. GEORGE CROLY, LL.D.

AUTHOR OF "SALATHIEL," &c. &c.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

SECOND EDITION.

LONDON:

HENRY COLBURN, PUBLISHER,

GREAT MARLBOROUGH STREET.

1847.

MK

PREFACE.

The principal scene of these volumes is laid in the earlier periods of the French Revolution. The history of that fearful time has been already given by able hands. But the historian loves to sketch his portraits on a large scale:—colossal crimes; calamities which overwhelm nations at a blow; characters of dazzling ability, or enormous guilt; are the favourite subjects of the historic pencil. It remains for works of another dimension, to delineate the more obscure miseries, which make the true wretchedness of revolution.

It was not in the field, though the generations of France were swept from the earth by millions; nor in the heroic martyrdom of the scaffold, though it streamed with royal and noble gore; that the keenest agonies were inflicted on the nation. Their place was the fireside. It was in the merciless insults, the protracted imprisonments, the returnless exiles, the cruel plunders, and the desperate massacres, of the middle and lower orders of France, that the heaviest suffering was inflicted on the land. It was not in the fall of the statesman, the noble, or even of the monarch, that the true malignity of the rebellion was shown; it was in its penetration to

every recess of human feeling; in its wounding every shape of society; in its universal oppression; in its remorseless withering of every natural pursuit and faculty of man; in bankruptcy, famine, and despair; that the iron of the Revolution "entered into the soul."

The general tendency of Europe at this hour is to political Change. But the true peril is not to be looked for on the Continent. The frivolities of foreign life waste all national energy for either good or ill; the flame exhausts itself through the mere feebleness of the fuel. The ball-room patriotism and the coffee-house conspiracy are equally contemptible. Even the French Revolution was only the madness of a mob, justly terminating in the chain.

The real danger would be in an English Revolution. If the popular mind, with its proverbial strength, steadiness, and courage, should once be thoroughly inflamed, the conflagration would spread to every throne of Europe. A republic in England would republicanise the world; turn all the old institutions of society into dust and ashes; and leave nothing to posterity, but the task of deploring our rashness, or hopelessly struggling to restore our ruins.

Without desiring to say, that these volumes have been written solely for the purpose of giving a public lesson; their writer will consider himself fortunate, if they should assist in impressing the conviction, that in all violent political change, the humblest ranks are sure to suffer most; that their

bodies are used merely to fill up the trench over which their leaders pass to power; that their severest sacrifices only turn a demagogue into a tyrant; and that the only alternatives of a democracy are national decay, or military despotism.

In the sketch of the British campaigns in the Netherlands, some attempt is made to do justice to the gallantry of exploits, which, though obscured by the broader triumphs of later times, ought never to be forgotten. The campaign of 1793 was one of the most brilliant in the annals of war.

In alluding to the Statesmen, who fought the more dubious battle of the Constitution; the writer has regarded them, less as the heads of party, than as illustrating that copiousness of intellectual power, and that exhaustless material of national greatness, which are created by the institutions of England. He passes down their ranks, as he might along a gallery of their statues; seeing only their imperishable features, and mingling his recollections with the reverence due to the grave.

This work originally appeared, in fragments, in Blackwood's Magazine, a publication well known for its attachment to the Constitution. As the mode of its appearing necessarily broke up all the connexion of story, and all the identity of character; it is now given to the public under a form which restores that connexion and that identity.

NOTICE.

In deference to the feelings, and in compliance with the wish, of the Author; the publication of these volumes has been delayed, although they were printed, before the occurrence of his severe domestic affliction.

MARSTON,

OR

MEMOIRS OF A STATESMAN.

CHAPTER I.

"Have I not in my time heard lions roar?
Have I not heard the sea, puft up with wind,
Rage like an angry boar chafed with sweat?
Have I not heard great ordnance in the field,
And heaven's artillery thunder in the skies?
Have I not in the pitched battle heard
Loud 'larums, neighing steeds, and trumpets clang?"

SHAKSPEARE.

WHY I give the world a sketch of my career through it, is not among the discoveries which I intend to make. I have been a public man; let those who know public life, imagine what interest may be felt in reviewing the scenes and struggles of which such a life is full. May there not be a pleasure, in conceiving once again the shapes and circumstances of things; as one sitting by his fire-side sees castles and cottages, men, women, and children in the embers, and shapes them the better

for the silence and the solitude round him? Let the reader choose what reason he will. I have seen the world, and fought my way through it; have struggled, like greater men, have risen, like lesser; have been flung into the most rapid current of the most hurried, wild, and vivid time that the world has ever seen, and have floated. I have *lived* through the last fifty years. In the vigour of life, I mingled in some of the greatest transactions, and was mingled with some of the greatest men, of my time. Now, like one who has plunged down Niagara, and survived the fall; though I have reached still-water, the roar of the cataract is yet in my ears; and I can even survey it with a fuller gaze, and a stronger sense of its vastness and power, than when I was standing on the edge of the precipice.

I have been soldier, adventurer, traveller, statesman. I have been lover, husband, father—poor, and opulent; obscure, and conspicuous. There are few sensations of our nature, or circumstances of our life, which I have not undergone—alternately suffering, to the verge of despair, and enjoying, like an epicurean deity. I have sacrificed to the love of power; I have been disgusted with its possession. I figured in the great Babel, until I loved even its confusion of tongues; I grew weary of it, until I hated the voice of man.

Every man is born for a special purpose, and with a special passion. Yet the multitude, possessing both, seldom exhibit either; they are flung, or choose to be flung, into the pond, where they float only to perish, like blind puppies. But there are

others, who stem the great tide, and are only the stronger for the struggle. From my first thought, the passion, to be known and felt, even at the hazard of being undone, was *my* impulse. It has been the impulse of all men who have ever impressed the world. With great talents it is all-commanding: the thunderbolt in the hands of Jove. Even with inferior faculties, and I make no pretence to superiority in mine, it singularly excites, urges, and animates. When the prophet saw the "leopard *winged*," he saw a miracle; I claim for my powers only those of muscle and sinew.

Ambition was the original passion of my nature. It rose before me, as the sun ascends before the Indian, until its fire drives him to the shade. I, too, have worshipped like the Gheber, but before no unhallowed fire. But time deals alike with all. I can now amuse myself only by images of the past; and, in the darkness and solitude of years, I take their magic lantern, and replace life, by the strange, wild, and high-coloured extravagances, the ghosts and genii of the phantasmagoria of ambition.

I was that luckless being, a second son of one of the oldest families in England. If I had been the seventh son of the seventh son, I should, by all the laws of juggling, have been a conjurer; but I was a generation too early for fame. My father was an earl, and as proud of his titles as if he had won them at Crecy or Poictiers; and not in the campaigns of Westminster, consummated on the backstairs of Whitehall. He had served his country, as he termed it, in a long succession of parliaments; and served her still more,

as his country neighbours termed it, by accepting a peerage, which opened the county to any other representative among the sons of men. He was a strong-built, stern-countenanced, and haughty-tongued personage; by some thought a man of sense; by others a fool, with all his depth, arising from his darkness. My own experience convinced me, that no man made more of a secret, or thought less of a job. From my boyhood, I must own, that I feared more than honoured him; and as for love, even if I had been more susceptible, mine would have flown round the globe before it could have fixed on that iron visage. The little love which I could afford for any human being, was for another and a different order of existence. Boys have a natural fondness for their mother; and mine was gentle, timid, and fond. She always parted with me, on my going to school, as if she had lost a limb; and when I returned, received me as if she had found a pinion in its place. She perhaps spoiled me by indulgence, as much as my lord and father spoiled me by severity; but indulgence is the pleasanter of the two, and I followed the course of nature, and gave her whatever heart I have.

I still remember her. She was remarkably indebted to nature, at least for externals. She had fine eyes; large, dark, and sentimental; her dress, which would now be preposterous, seemed to me, then, the perfection of all taste, and was in the highest fashion of her time. Her beauty worked miracles; for now and then I have observed even my father's eye fixed on her, with something of the

admiration which we might conceive in an Esquimaux for a fixed star, or in an Italian highwayman for some Parian statue which he had stumbled on in his thickets. But the admiration was soon absorbed in the job in hand, and he turned away, to scribble to the minister.

Of the younger portion of the family I shall say but little. Children are happiest in the nursery, and there I leave them. I had two sisters, sweet little creatures, one with black eyes and the other with blue. This is enough for their description. My four brothers were four rough, bold, well-looking animals, all intended for ambassadors, admirals, generals, and secretaries of state; for my father had too long tasted of the honey of official life to think that there was any other food for a gentleman in the world. He had been suckled for too many years at those breasts, which, like the bosom of the great Egyptian goddess, pour the stream of life through whole generations of hangers-on, to believe that any other fount of existence was to be named, than the Civil list. I am strongly inclined to surmise, that he would have preferred a pencil, purloined from the treasury, to all the cedars of Lebanon.

It may be presumed, that I was destined for public life—in other words, to live on the public; and, to prepare me for the performance of a part, alternately menial and master—supple, as the slave, and superb, as the minister—I was sent to Eton. At this great school of the aristocracy, would-be and real, barons and dukes *in esse;* and the herald's office alone, or bedlam, knows what, *in posse;* I remained, for the

customary number of years. If whoever does me the honour to read these pages, hates the history of schooldays as much as I do their memory, he will easily pardon my passing by the topic altogether. If the first purpose of all great public institutions is to stand still; the great schools of England, fifty years ago, were righteous adherents to their contract; for they never moved. The world might whirl round them as it would; there remained the grey milestones, only measuring the speed with which every thing on the road passed them. This, among all our great public schools, has fortunately changed in later years. But the change must proceed; the venerable cripples must throw by their crutches, and try the use of bone and blood. Flogging and fagging, are the education for a footman; they disgrace the common sense, and offend the feelings of a manly people. The pugilist must be expelled, and the puppy must follow him. The detestable grossnesses of classical impurity, must no longer be the price at which Latin "quantities" are to be learned. The last lesson of the "prodigal son," must not be the first learned by the son of the gentleman of England—to be fed on "husks" fit only for the swine.

On my delighted release from this supreme laboratory of statesmen, I found the condition of things considerably altered at Mortimer Castle. I had left it a stately but rather melancholy-looking household; I now found the mansion glittering in all the novelty of French furniture, gilding, and *or-molu;* and crowded with fashion, and all its menial tribe,

from the groom in the stables, to the gentleman's gentleman, who slipped along the chambers in soft silence, and looked an embodying of etiquette. All was new, in all the kinds of novelty; the very avenue was trimmed until it resembled a wood on the stage; and the grounds, once sober and still enough for a Jacques to escape from the sight of human kind, and hold dialogues with the deer, were now levelled, opened, shorn, and shaved, with the precision of a retired citizen's elysium.

The heads of the family were equally changed; my mother, unhappily, for the worse. Still, her fine eyes beamed with joy as she threw herself upon my neck, and murmured some of those mingled blessings and raptures, which have a language of their own. But when the first flush was past, I perceived that the cheek was thin, the eye was hollow and heavy, and the tremulous motion of her slight hand, as it lay in mine, alarmed me; in all my ignorance of the frailty of the human frame. But the grand change was in the earl. My father, whom I had left rather degenerating into the shape which three courses and a bottle of claret a day inflict on country gentlemen "who live at home at ease;" was now braced and laced, costumed in the newest fashion, and overflowing with exuberant volatility. He breathed of Bond-street. He welcomed me with an ardour which astonished, much more than it delighted, me; talked fragments of French, congratulated me on my "*air distingué*," advised me to put myself "*en grande tenue*;" and, after enchanting me in all kinds of strange ways, concluded by making an attempt to

kiss me on both cheeks, like a Frenchman. My Eton recollections enabled me to resist the paternal embrace. At length, the wonder was simplified, by the discovery, that the family had but just returned from a continental residence of a couple of years—a matter, of which no letter or word had given me the knowledge at my school. My next discovery was, that an old uncle had died, and left us money enough to carry the county; and the last and crowning one was, that my eldest brother had just been returned for the North Riding.

This was such an accumulation of good-luck, as might have thrown any elderly gentleman off the balance of his gravity. It was like Philip's three plates at the Greek horse-races, crowned by the birth of Alexander. If my lordly father had danced the "Minuette de la Cour" over the marble tesselation of his own hall, I should now not have been surprised. But, from my first sense, or insensibility, I had felt no great delight in the glories of our household; and after a remarkably brief period, the showy *déjeûnés* and dinners which commemorated the triumphs of the heir-apparent of our name, grew tiresome to me beyond all count; and I openly petitioned to be sent to college, or to the world's end!

My petition was listened to with a mixture of contempt for my want of taste, and astonishment at my presumption. But, before the reply had time to burst out from lips, at no time too retentive, I was told, that at the end of one week more I should be suffered to take my way; that week being devoted

to a round of especial entertainments in honour of my brother's election; the whole to be wound up by that most preposterous of all raptures, an amateur play.

> "Delight of all delights, the 'private play;'
> The men, forgetting all they have to say;
> The ladies, queens, *soubrettes*, the old, the young,
> Losing alike their native gift of tongue;
> Heroes and heroines, whispering, scene by scene,
> While not a soul can guess what either mean;
> Save now and then a stumble, or a squall,
> Till the green baize, like charity, hides all!"

To keep a house in commotion, to produce mysterious conversations, conferences without number, and confidences without end; and alike to perturb maidens' hearts and swell milliners' bills, let me recommend an amateur play in the country. The very mention of it awoke every soul in the castle; caps and complexions were matched, and costumes criticised, from morning till night, among the ladies. The "acting drama" was turned over leaf by leaf by the gentlemen. The sound of many a heavy tread of many a heavy student, was heard in the chambers; the gardens were haunted by "the characters" getting their parts; and the poet's burlesque of those who "rave, recite, and madden round the land," was realized to the life in the histrionic labours of the votaries of Thalia and Melpomene, who ranged the groves of Mortimer Castle.

First of the first, we had all the charming difficulty of fixing on the play. The dullest and dreariest of our country Rosciuses were uniformly for comedy; but the fair sex have a leaning to the tragic muse.

We had one or two, who would have had no objection to be piquant in Lady Teazle, or petulant in Lady Townley; but we had half a dozen Desdemonas and Ophelias. The soul of an O'Neil was in every one of our party conscious of a pair of good eyes, a tolerable shape, and the captivation which, in some way or other, most women in existence contrive to discover in their own share of the gifts of nature. At length the votes carried it for Romeo and Juliet. The eventful night came; the *élite* of the county poured in, the theatre was crowded; all was expectancy before the curtain; all was terror, nervousness, and awkwardness behind. The orchestra performed its flourish, and the curtain rose.

To do the heads of the household justice, they had done their duty as managers. The theatre, though but a temporary building, projecting from the ball-room into one of the gardens, was worthy of the very handsome apartment which formed its vestibule. The skill of a famous London architect had been exerted on this fairy erection, and Verona itself had, perhaps, in its palmiest days, seldom exhibited a display of more luxurious elegance. The audience, too, so totally different from the mingled, ill-dressed, and irregular assemblage that fills a city theatre; blooming girls and showy matrons, range above range, feathered and flowered, glittering with all the family jewels, and all animated by the novelty of the scene before them, formed an exhibition which, for the night, inspired me with the idea, that (strolling excepted) the stage might not be a bad resource for "a man of talents," after all.

But the play was—must I confess it? though I myself figured as the Romeo—utterly deplorable. The men perplexed their parts, and their casual attempts to recover them, made terrible havoc of the harmony of Shakspeare. The ladies lost their voices; and carried on their loves, their sorrows, and even their scoldings, in a melancholy murmur. Our play perfectly deserved the criticism of the old gentleman, who, after a similar performance, being asked, "which of the personages he liked best?" candidly replied, "the prompter, for of him he had heard the most, and seen the least."

However, every thing has an end; and we had carried Juliet to the tomb of all the Capulets, the chant was done, and the mourners were gathered in the green-room. I was standing, book in hand, preparing for the last agonies of a love, very imperfectly committed to memory, when I heard a slight confusion in the court-yard, and shortly after, the rattle of a post-chaise. The sound subsided, and I was summoned to my post at the entrance to the place where the lovely Juliet lay entranced. The pasteboard gate gave way to knocks enforced with an energy which called down rapturous applause; and in all the tortures of a broken heart, rewarded by a profusion of handkerchiefs applied to bright eyes, and a strong scent of hartshorn round the house, I summoned my fair bride to my arms. But there was no reply. I again invoked her; she was silent. Her trance was evidently of the deepest order. I rose from the ground, where I had been "taking the measure of my unmade grave," and approaching the bier, ven-

tured to drop a despairing hand upon her pillow. To my utter surprise, it was vacant. If I had been another Shakspeare, the situation was a fine one for a display of original genius. But I was paralyzed. A sense of the general embarrassment was my first impression, and I was absolutely struck dumb. But this was soon shaken off. My next was a sense of the particular burlesque of my situation; I burst out into laughter, in which the whole house joined; and throwing down my mattock, rushed off the stage. My theatrical dream was broken up for ever.

But weightier matters soon absorbed the universal interest. The disappearance of the heroine from the stage was speedily accounted for, by her flight in the carriage whose wheels had disturbed my study. But whither fled, why, and with whom? We now found other defalcations in our numbers; the Chevalier Paul Charlatanski, a gallant Polish exile, who contrived to pass a very pleasant time on the merit of his misfortunes; a man of equally enormous moustaches and calamities, was also missing. His valet, his valise, every atom that ever appertained to him, had vanished; the clearance was complete. The confusion now thickened. I never saw the master of the mansion in such a rage before. Pistols and post-chaises were in instant requisition. He vowed, that the honour of his house was involved in the transaction, and that nothing should tempt him to slumber, until he had brought back the fugitive fair one to the arms of her noble family; my Juliet being the ward of a duke, and being also entitled to about twenty thousand pounds a year on her coming of age.

As for the unlucky, or rather the lucky, Chevalier, nothing human ever received a hotter shower of surmise and sarcasm. That he was "an impostor, a swindler, a spy," was the earl's conviction, declared in the most public manner. The whole body of matrons looked round on their blooming innocents, as if they had been snatched from the jaws of a legion of wolves; and thanked their own prudence for never having trusted those men of moustaches within their hall doors. The blooming innocents responded in filial gratitude, and, with whatever sincerity, thanked their stars for their fortunate escape.

Still, the earl's indignation was of so *ultra* a quality; his revenge was so fiery, and his tongue so fluent; as to make me suspect that he had other motives than the insulted laws of hospitality. I reached this discovery, too, in time. The declining health of my gentle mother had made him speculate on the chances of survivorship. He certainly was no longer young, and he had never been an Adonis. Yet his glass did not altogether throw him into the rank of the "impracticable." A coronet, too, was a well-known charm, which had often compensated for every other; in short, he had quietly theorized himself into the future husband of the ducal ward; and felt on this occasion as an earl should, plundered, before his face, of a clear twenty thousand a year.

But, he was not to suffer alone. On further inquiry, it was ascertained that the chevalier's valet had *not* gone with him. This fellow, a Frenchman, had taken wing in another direction, and carried off *his* turtle-dove, too; not one of the full-blown roses of

the servants' hall, but a rosebud, the heiress of one of the bulkiest squires of the Riding, a man of countless beeves and blunders; one of our Yorkshire Nimrods, "a mighty hunter," until club dinners and home-brewed ale had tied him to his arm-chair, and gout had made him a man of peace and flannels—the fattest weed in the swamps of Yorkshire. The young lady had been intended for my eldest brother, as a convenient medium of connexion between two estates, palpably made for matrimony. Thus, we received two mortal blows in one evening; never was family pilfered more ignominiously; never was amateur play more peevishly catastrophized.

It must be owned, to the credit of "private theatricals," that the play had no slight share in the plot. The easy intercourse produced by rehearsals, the getting of tender speeches by heart, the pretty personalities and soft allusions growing out of those speeches, the ramblings through myrtle shades and rose-twined parterres, the raptures and romance, all tend prodigiously to take off the alarm, or instruct the inexperience, of the female heart. I know no more certain cure for the rigidity, that is supposed to be a barrier to runaway matches. At all events, the Chevalier and his valet, probably both footmen, had profited alike of their opportunity. Our play had cost us two elopements;—two shots between wind and water, which threatened to send the ship down; —two breakings of that heart which men carry in their purse. I laughed, and the world laughed too. But I was then thoughtless, and the world is always malicious. My father and "the member," though

they had "never told their love," felt the blow "like a worm in the bud," and from that night I date the family decline.

Of course, the two whiskered vagabonds could not be suffered to carry off their laurels without an attempt to crop them, and my father and brother were too much in earnest in their objects, to lose time. In half an hour, four post-horses to each britchska whirled them off;—my father, to take the northern road; some hints of Gretna having transpired in the slipshod confidences of the servants' hall—my brother, to pursue on the Dover road; conjecturing, with more sagacity than I had given him credit for, that, as the fox runs to his earth, the Frenchman always speeds for Paris.

The crowd dispersed, after having stayed long enough to glean all that they could of the family misfortune, and fix appointments for every day in the week, to meet each other, and make the most of the whole transaction. But still, a tolerable number of the steadier hands remained; who, to show their sympathy with us, resolved not to separate, until they had received tidings of his lordship's success. I was voted to the head of the table, more claret was ordered, the wreck of the general supper was cleared away for one of a snugger kind; and we drew our chairs together. Toast followed toast, and the party became communicative. Family histories, not excepting our own, were now discussed, with a confidence new to my boyish conjectures; Charlatanski's career abroad and at home seemed to be as well known, as if he had been pilloried in the county town; the in-

finite absurdity of the noble duke who had suffered him to make his way under his roof, and the palpable *penchant* of his ward, next underwent discussion; until the ignorance of my noble father on the subject gave, with me, the death-blow to his penetration. The valet contrivances which had won the primrose heart of my brother's intended spouse, I found equally notorious; the Earl's projects were both declared as plainly as if he had pronounced them *viva voce;* and before we parted "for the night" (which did not occur until the sun was blazing through the curtains of our banqueting room), I had made up my mind, once for all, that neither character nor cunning can be long concealed in this world; that the craftiest impostor is but a clumsier kind of clown; and that the most dexterous disguise is but a waste of time.

I hasten to the *dénouement.* Our excellent friends indulged us with their company, and bored us with their society, for a mortal week. But, as Sterne says of the sentimental traveller, scenes of sentiment are always exhibiting themselves to an appetite eager for knowing what the world is doing; and the knowledge in this instance was contributed with a copiousness which left nothing to learn, and but little to desire. Our guests were of that class which usually fills the houses of noblemen, in the annihilation of life in town;—clubmen, to whom St. James's street was the terraqueous globe; guardsmen, on leave of absence for the shooting season; and noble lords, saturated with London. I must not forget those makeweights of society, whom one finds everywhere; old exhibitors in the fashionable circles, who as naturally follow

where young guardsmen and wealthy squires are to be found, as flies wing to the honey on which they live; with two or three of the most opulent and dullest baronets who ever played whist and billiards, for the advantage of losing guinea points to gentlemen more accomplished in the science of chances.

At length, on the sixth day; when I began to feel really anxious, an express announced, that the Earl had arrived at a village, about fifty miles off, on his way home, wounded, and in great danger. I instantly broke up the convivial party, and set out to meet him. I cannot dwell on the scene of that melancholy meeting. Even now it recalls images of the deepest regret. To the imagination of a boy, as I was then, nothing could be more startling than even the aspect of the habitation which now held the haughty Earl of Mortimer. After passing through a variety of dungeon-like rooms; for the house had once been a workhouse, or something of the kind, I was ushered into the chamber where my unhappy father lay. The village doctor, and one or two of the wise people of the neighbourhood, who "thought it their duty to visit a stranger," that stranger being a man of rank, were the only attendants; and the long faces of those persons, seconded by the professional shake of the doctor's head, told me, that they at least had no hope. It was not so with the sufferer himself, for he talked as largely and loftily of what he was to do within the next ten years, as if he was to survive a century. He still breathed rage and retribution against the Chevalier, and actually seemed to regard the lady's choice as a particular infraction of

personal claims. He had pursued the fugitives day and night, until the pursuit threw him into a kind of fever. While under this paroxysm, he had met the enamoured pair, but it was on their way from that forge on the Border where so many heavy chains have been manufactured. Useless as challenging was then, he challenged the husband. The parties met, and my father received a bullet in his body, while he had the satisfaction of lodging one in his antagonist's knee-pan. The Chevalier was doomed to waltz no more. But his bullet was fatal.

As I looked round the wretched chamber, in which this bold and busy spirit was inevitably about to breathe its last, Pope's lines, on the most splendid *roué* of his day, involuntarily and painfully shot across my recollection :—

> " In the worst inn's worst room, with mat half hung,
> The walls of plaster, and the floor of dung;
> The George and garter dangling from the bed,
> Where tawdry yellow strove with dirty red,
> Great Villiers lies; alas! how changed from him
> The glass of fashion and the soul of whim!"

I say no more of this most distressing time; a few days, only enough to collect the branches of the family round the bed, terminated every thing. Grief, they say, cannot exist where there is no love; but I was not inclined, at such a moment, to draw subtle distinctions. I was grieved, more than I conceived it possible for my nature to grieve at any misfortune. I hung over the bed. I felt an indescribable sense of loss. The calm, pale features of the form before me seemed to me more those of my father, than, in

life, they had ever been. I could not be prevailed on to leave the chamber, until the last duties were about to be paid. They were done, without blame to myself, or, I hope, irreverence in the sight of others. The funeral was stately; and all was over.

Matters now took a new shape at the castle. My brother returned, to find himself its possessor. His journey had been equally unproductive with my unfortunate father's. By dint of bribing the postillions, he had, at first, overpassed the fugitives on the Dover road. But, as he stopped to dine in Canterbury, where he prepared a *posse* of constables for their reception; he had, unluckily, been accosted by an old London acquaintance, who had accidentally fixed his quarters there for a day or two, "seeking whom he might devour." The dinner was followed by a carouse, the carouse by a "quiet game," or games, which lasted till the next day; and, when my brother rose, with the glow of a superb sunset giving him the first intimation that he was among the living; he made the double discovery, that he was stripped to the last shilling of five hundred pounds, and that the Frenchman and his prize had quietly changed horses at the same hotel half a dozen hours before.

CHAPTER II.

All things that we ordained festival
Turn from their office to black funeral,
Our instruments to melancholy bells;
Our wedding cheer to a sad burial feast;
Our solemn hymns to sullen dirges change;
Our bridal flowers serve for a burial corse,
And all things change them to the contrary.

SHAKSPEARE.

THE young may forget quickly, but they feel keenly. The event which I had just witnessed, threw a shade over me; which, in the want of any vigorous occupation, began to affect my health. I abjured the sports of the field, for which, indeed, I had never felt much liking. I rambled through the woods in a kind of dreamy idleness of mind, which took but little note of any thing, time included. As mendicants sell tapes and matches, to escape the imputation of mendicancy; I carried a pencil and portfolio, and seemed to be sketching venerable oaks, and patches of the picturesque, while my mind was wandering from line to pole. But, in this earth no one can be singular with impunity. The gentlemen were "convinced" that my meditations were heavy with unpaid college

bills; and the ladies, from high to low, from "Tilburina, mad in white satin," to her "confidante, mad in white linen," were all of opinion, that some one among their peerless selves had destroyed the "five wits" of young Mr. Marston. I could have fallen on them with a two-handed sword; but, as the massacre of the sex was not in my power, I had only to escape.

There were also higher matters to move me. Clouds were gathering on the world; the times were fitful; the air was thick with rumours from abroad; the sleep of the Continent was breaking up; and Europe lay in the anxious and strange expectancy, in which some great city might see the signs of a coming earthquake, without the power of ascertaining at what moment, or from what quarter, its foundations were to be flung up in sight of the world.—We were then in the first stage of the French Revolution!

I resolved to linger and be libelled no more; and being ushered, "by appointment," into the library—for the new master of it, was already all etiquette—I promptly stated my wishes, and demanded my portion, to try my fortune in the world.

Our conference, if it had but little of the graces of diplomacy, had much more than its usual decision. It was abrupt and unhesitating. My demand had evidently taken his "lordship" by surprise. He started from the magisterial chair, in which he was yet to awe so many successions of rustic functionaries, and with a flushed cheek asked "Whether I was lunatic, or supposed him to be so?"

"Neither the one nor the other," was my answer. "But, to waste life here, is out of the question. I demand the means of beginning a profession."

"Are you aware, sir," was the reply, "that our interest is lost, since the change of ministers? that my estate is loaded with encumbrances? and that every profession is overstocked? What can you do in the crowd?"

"What others have done—what I should do, in a crowd in the streets—push some aside, get before others; if made way for, be civil; if resisted, trample; it has been the history of thousands, why not mine?"

My doctrine was as new to this son of indulgence, as if I had propounded the philosopher's stone. But, his courage was exhausted by a controversy, perhaps longer than he had ever ventured on before. He walked to the glass, adjusted his glossy ringlets, and having refreshed his spirits with the contemplation, inquired, with a smile which made the nearest possible approach to a sneer, "whether I had any thing more to say?"

I had more, and of the kind that least suited his feelings. I demanded "my property."

The effect of those two words was electrical. The apathy of the exquisite was at an end, and in a voice of the most indignant displeasure, he rapidly demanded, "whether I expected money to fall from the moon? whether I was not aware of the expense of keeping up the castle? whether I supposed that my mother's jointure and my sisters' portions could ever be paid, without dipping the rent-roll deeper still?" and, after

various and bitter expostulation, "What right had I to suppose, that I was worth the smallest coin of the realm, except by his bounty?"

One query answered them all. "My lord, is it not true that I am entitled to five thousand pounds?"

"Five thousand ——?" what word filled the interval I must not say. But, the first lesson which a man learns at the clubs is, to control his temper, when its display is not likely to be attended with effect. He saw that I stood his gaze with but few symptoms of giving way, and he changed his tactics with an adroitness that did honour to his training. Approaching me, he held out his hand. "Charles, why should *we* quarrel about trifles? I was really not acquainted with the circumstance to which you allude, but I shall look into it without delay. Pray, can you tell me the when, the where, the how?"

"Your questions may be easily answered. The *when* was at the death of our uncle, the *where* was in his will, and the *how*—in any way your lordship pleases." The truce was now made; he begged of me, "as I valued *his* feelings," to drop the formality of his title, to regard him simply as a brother, and to rely on his wish to forward every object that might gratify my inclination.

Our conference broke up. He galloped to a neighbouring horse-race. I went to take a solitary ramble through the park.

The hour and the scene were what the poet pronounces "fit to cure all sadness but despair." Noble old trees, the "roof star-proof" over head, the cool

velvet grass under my feet, glimpses of sunlight striking through the trunks, the freshened air coming in gusts across the lake, like new life, bathing my burning forehead and feverish hands—the whole unrivalled sweetness of the English landscape was around, to soften, and subdue me. Those effects are so common, that I can claim no credit for their operation on my mind; and, before I had gone far, I was on the point of returning, if not to recant, at least to palliate the harshness of my appeal to fraternal justice.

But, by this time I had reached a rising ground, which commanded a large extent of the surrounding country. The evening was one of those magnificent closes of the year, which, like a final scene in a theatre, seems intended to comprehend all the beauties and brilliancies of the past. The western sky was a blaze of all colours, and all pouring over that succession of forest, cultured field, and mountain-top, which make the English view, if not the most sublime, the most touching of the earth!

But, as I stood on the hill, gazing round, to enjoy every shape and shade at leisure; my eye turned on the castle. It spoiled all my serenity at once. I felt, that it was a spot from which I was excluded by nature; that it belonged to others so wholly, as scarcely by any conceivable chance ever to be mine; and that I could remain within its walls no longer, but with a sense of uselessness and shame.

If I could have taken staff in hand and pack on shoulder at that moment; I should have started on a pilgrimage, that might have circled the globe. But,

the most fiery resolutions must submit to circumstances. One night more, at least, I must sleep under the paternal roof; and I was hastening home, brooding over bitter thoughts; when I suddenly rushed against some one, whom I nearly overthrew. "Bless me, Mr. Marston, is it you?" told me, that I had run down my old tutor, Mr. Vincent, the parson of the parish. He had been returning from visiting some of his flock; in the spirit of the vocation which he had just been fulfilling, he saw that something went ill with me, and taking my arm, forced me to go home with him, for such comfort as he could give.

Parsons, above all men, are the better for wives and children; for, without them, they are wonderfully apt to grow either saturnine or stupid. Of course there are exceptions. Vincent had a wife; not much younger than himself, to whom he always spoke with the courtesy of a *preux chevalier*. A portrait of her in her bridal dress showed that she had been a pretty brunette in her youth; and her husband evidently still gave her credit for all that she had been. They had, as is generally the fate of the clergy, a superfluity of daughters; four or five, I think, creatures as thoughtless and innocent as their own poultry, or pet-sheep. But all round their little Vicarage was so pure, so quiet, and so neat—there was such an aspect of order, and even of elegance, however inexpensive; that its contrast with the glaring and restless tumult of the "great house" was irresistible. I never had so full a practical understanding of the world's "pomps and vanities," as

while looking at their contrast in the trimmings and trellises of the parson's dwelling.

I acknowledge myself no sentimentalist, but I suppose that all is not lead or iron within me, from my sense of scenes like this. In my wildest hour, the sight of fields and gardens has been a kind of febrifuge to me—has conveyed a feeling of tranquillity to my mind; as if it drank the silence and the freshness, as the flowers drink the dew. I have often thus experienced a sudden soothing, which checked the hot current of my follies or frenzies, and made me think, that there were better things than the baubles of the world.

I mention this evening, because it decided my future life; or, at least, the boldest, and perhaps the most trying, portion of it. We had an hour or two of the little variations of placid amusement, which belong to all parsonages in romances, but which here were reality:—easy conversation on the events of the county; a little political talking with the vicar; and a few details of persons and fashions at the Castle; to which the ladies listened, as Desdemona listened to Othello's history. For the castle was so seldom visited by them, that it had almost the air of a castle of Otranto, and they evidently thought that its frowning towers and gilded halls belonged to another race, if not to another region, of existence. We had, too, some of the last new songs (at least half a century old, but which were not the less touching), and a duet of Geminiani, performed by the two elder proficients, on a spinet which might have been among the "chamber music" of the Virgin Queen. All slight

matters to speak of, and yet which contributed to the quietude of a mind longing for rest—sights of innocence and sounds of peace, which, like the poet's music—

> "Might take the prison'd soul
> And lap it in Elysium."

The moon shining in through panes covered with honeysuckle and fragrance of all kinds, at length warned me, that I was intruding on a household, primitive in their hours, as in every thing else; and I rose to take my leave. But I could not be altogether parted with, yet. It happened, that they saw in me a most amusing guest; while, to my own conception, I had been singularly spiritless: but the little anecdotes which were trite to me, had been novelties to them. Fashion has a charm even for philosophers; and the freaks and follies of the high-toned sons and daughters of fashion—who wore down my gentle mother's frame, drained my showy father's rental, and made even myself loathe the sight of loaded barouches coming to discharge their cargoes of beaux and belles on us for weeks together—were nectar and ambrosia to my sportive and rosy-cheeked audience. The girls at length put on their bonnets, and looking like a group of Titania and her nymphs, as they bounded along in the moonlight; escorted us to the boundary of the vicar's territory.

We were about to separate, with all the pretty formalities of village leave-taking; when their father, in the act of shaking hands with me, fixed his eye on mine, and insisted on seeing me home. Whether the thought occurred to him, that I had still something

on my mind, which was not to be trusted within sight of a brook that formed the boundary to the castle grounds; I know not, but I complied; the girls were sent homewards, and I heard their gay voices mingling, at a distance, and not unsuitably, with the song of the nightingale.

I took his arm, and we walked on for a while in silence. At length, slackening his pace, and speaking in a tone whose earnestness struck me, "Charles," said he, "has anything peculiarly painful lately happened to you?—if so, speak out. I know your nature to be above disguise; and with whom can you repose your vexations, if such there be, more safely than with your old tutor?"

I was taken unawares; and not having yet formed a distinct conception of my own grievances, promptly denied that I had any.

"It may be so," said my friend; "and yet once or twice this evening I saw your cheek alternately flush and grow pale, with a suddenness that alarmed me for your health. In one of your pleasantest stories, while you were acting the narrative with a liveliness evidently unconscious, and giving me and mine a treat which we have not had for a long time; I observed your voice falter, as if some spasm of soul had shot across you; and I unquestionably saw, that rare sight in the eyes of man, a tear."

I denied this instance of weakness stoutly; but the old man's importunities prevailed; and, by degrees, I told him, or rather his good-natured cross-examination moulded for me, a statement of my anxieties at home.

The Vicar, with all his simplicity of manner, was a man of powerful and practical understanding. He had been an eminent scholar at his university, and was in a fair way for all its distinctions; when he thought proper to fall desperately in love. This, of course, demolished his prospects at once. I never heard his subsequent history in detail; but he had left England, and undergone a long period of disheartening and distress. Whether he had not, in those times of desolation, taken service in the Austrian army, and even shared some of its Turkish campaigns, was a question which I heard once or twice started at the castle; and a slight contraction of the arm, and a rather significant scar which crossed his bold forehead, had been set down to the account of an Osmanli scymetar.

Vincent had never told the story of either; but a rumour reached his college, of his having been seen in the Austrian uniform on the Transylvanian frontier, during the campaigns of the Prince of Coburg, and Laudohn, against the Turks. It was singular enough, that on this very evening, in arguing against some of my whims touching destinies and omens; he illustrated the facility of imposture on such points, by an incident from one of those campaigns.

"A friend of mine," said he, "a captain in the Lichtenstein hussars, happened to be on the outpost service of the army. As the enemy were in great force, and commanded by the Vizier in person, an action was daily expected, and the pickets and vedettes were ordered to be particularly on the alert. But, on a sudden, every night produced some casualty.

They either lost vedettes, or their patrol was surprised, or their baggage plundered; in short, they began to be the talk of the army. The regiment had been always one of the most distinguished in the service, and those misfortunes were wholly unaccountable. At length a stronger picket than usual was ordered for the night; but not a man of them was to be found in the morning. No firing had been heard, and the natural conjecture was, that they must have all deserted. As this was a still more disgraceful result than actual defeat, the colonel called his officers together, to give what information they could. The camp, as usual, swarmed with Bohemians, fortune-tellers, and gipsies, a race who carry intelligence on both sides; and whose performances might fully account for the knowledge which the enemy evidently had of our outposts. The first order was, therefore, to clear the quarters of the regiment of those encumbrances, and the next, to direct the vedettes, to fire without challenging. At midnight a shot was heard; all turned out, and on reaching the spot where the alarm had been given, the vedette was found lying on the ground and senseless, though without a wound. On his recovery, he said that he had seen a ghost; but that having fired at it, according to orders, it looked so horribly grim at him, that he fell from his horse, and saw no more. The Austrians are brave, but they are remarkably afraid of supernatural visitants, and a ghost would be a much more formidable thing to most of them than a discharge of grape-shot.

"My friend, the captain, was an Englishman; and as John Bull is supposed, among foreigners, to carry

an unusual portion of brains about him, the colonel took him into his especial council in the emergency. Having settled their measures, the captain prepared to take charge of the pickets for the night, making no secret of his dispositions. At dark, the vedettes and sentries were posted as usual, and the officer took his post in the old field redoubt, which had been the head-quarters of the pickets for the last fortnight.

"All went on quietly, until about midnight; the men off duty fast asleep in their cloaks, and the captain reading an English novel. He, too, had grown weary of the night, and was thinking of stretching himself on the floor of his hut; when he saw, and not without some perturbation, a tall spectral figure, in armour, enter the works, stride over the sleeping men, without exciting the smallest movement amongst them, and advance towards him. He drew his breath hard, and attempted to call out; but his voice was choked, and he began to think himself under the dominion of a nightmare. The figure came nearer still, looking more menacing, and drew its sword. My friend, with an effort which he afterwards acknowledged to be desperate, put his hand to his side to draw his own. What was his alarm, when he found that it had vanished? At this moment his poodle, which, against all precautions, had followed him, began barking fiercely, and bounding alternately towards him and a corner of the redoubt. Though his sabre was gone, a brace of English pistols lay on the table beside him, and he fired one of them in the direction of the corner. The shot was followed by a

groan, and the disappearance of the spectre. The men started on their feet, and all rushed out in pursuit. The captain's first step struck upon a dead body, evidently that of the man who had fallen by his fire. The pursuit was now joined in by the whole regiment; which had been posted in the rear, to take advantage of circumstances. They pushed on, swept all before them, and bore down patrol and picket, until they reached the enemy's camp. The question then was, what to do next? whether to make the best of their way back, or try their chance forward? The Englishman's voice was, for taking fortune at the flow; and the accidental burning of a tent or two by the fugitives, showed him the Turks already in confusion. The trampling of battalions in the rear told him, at the same time, that he had powerful help at hand; and he dashed into the lines at once. The hussars, determined to retrieve their reputation, did wonders; the enemy were completely surprised. No troops, but those in the highest state of discipline, are good for any thing, when attacked at night. The gallantry of the Turk by day deserts him in the dark; and a night surprise, if followed up, is sure to end in a victory. From the random firing and shouting on every side, it was clear, that they had been taken totally unawares; and the rapid and general advance of the Austrian brigades, showed that Laudohn was in the mind to make a handsome Imperial bulletin. Day dawned on a rout, as complete as ever was witnessed in a barbarian campaign. The enemy were flying in all directions, like a horde of Tartars; and camp, cannon, baggage, standards,

every thing, that could make an army, was left at the mercy of their pursuers."

"But the captain, the Englishman, what became of him?" I asked, slightly glancing at the countenance of the narrator.

"Oh, he came off very well indeed! Foreign governments are generous to the soldier, and Joseph the Second, though an economist in civil matters, was liberal to his successful officers. The captain received a pension; a couple of orders; was made a colonel, on the first opportunity; and, besides, had his share of the plunder—no slight addition to his finances, for the military chest had been taken, in the baggage of the Seraskier."

"And by this time," said I, with an uninquiring air, "he is doubtless a field-marshal?"

"Nothing of the kind," replied my reverend friend, "for his victory cured him of soldiership. He was wounded in the engagement; and if he had been ever fool enough to think of fame, the solitary hours of his invalidism put an end to the folly. Other and dearer thoughts too recurred to his mind. He had now obtained something approaching to a competence, if rightly managed; he asked permission to retire, returned to England, married the woman whom he loved; and never for a moment regretted, that he was listening to larks and linnets instead of trumpets and cannon, and settling the concerns of rustics instead of manœuvring squadrons and battalions."

"But, what was the ghost, after all?"

"Nothing; the mere trick of a juggler! a figure projected on the air by some ingenious contrivance of

glasses. The instrument was found on the body of the performer; who turned out to be the colonel's valet—of course in the enemy's pay, and who furnished them with daily intelligence of all our proceedings. As for the loss of the sabre, which actually startled the ghost-seer most; he found it next morning hanging up in the hut, where he himself had placed it, and forgotten that he had done so."

"And the captain, or rather the colonel, brought with him to England, a scymetar-cut on his arm, and another on his forehead?" I asked, fixing my eyes on him. A sudden gloom passed over his countenance, he bit his lip and turned away. I feared, that I had offended irreparably. But his natural kindliness of heart prevailed, he turned to me gently, laughed, and pressing my hand in his, said, "You now have my secret. It has escaped me, for the first time these thirty years. Keep it like a man of honour."

I have always held that the life of man's mind, where man *has* a mind—which is not always the case—is a thing of fits and starts. I even doubt, whether any one, who will take the trouble to recollect, will not be able to lay his finger on the precise periods, at which new views of every thing suddenly opened before him, and he emerged at once, if not into new powers, at least into a new use of them. The frame may grow, like the tree; the faculties may grow as imperceptibly as the frame; but the mind acquires that knowledge of life which forms its exercise, its use, and perhaps its essence, by bounds and flights. This moonlight walk with my old and honoured Mentor, was the beginning of my mental

adolescence. My manhood was still to come, but with a more severe instructor.

As we were passing slowly through the plantations encircling the castle with all the noble and profuse shelter and ornament which our ancestors loved, a distant sound of music came on the wind. I then remembered, for the first time, that my brother on that evening gave a ball to the county; and a sudden feeling of the difference of our lots in life came painfully over me;—the course of secure wealth and English enjoyment, contrasted with the dependence and wandering, which must form the existence of myself and so many thousands of younger brothers.

I was awakened from my reverie by the voice of my companion. His face was upturned to the cloudless sky, and he was murmuring that fine passage in the Merchant of Venice:

> "Look, how the floor of heaven
> Is thick inlaid with patines of bright gold;
> There's not the smallest orb which thou behold'st,
> But in his motion like an angel sings,
> Still quiring to the young-eyed cherubins:
> Such harmony is in immortal souls."

"Do you know, Charles," said he, "what changed the whole current of my life? what, in fact, brought me back to England?" there was a slight pause.—"What made me a Christian? It was such a night as this. As you now know the chief part of my story, I need have no further concealment on the subject. I had recovered from my wounds, and was preparing to set out for Vienna; when, one night, a tempest blew down our tents, and left us to trust to

the open air till morning. Tempests in the south are violent, but they are generally brief, and this gale cleared the sky of every cloud. As I lay on the ground, and gazed on the unusual splendour of the stars, the thought occurred to me,—Why should doubts of a future state ever come into the mind of man? Why should he hesitate, as to its reality? Was it not there before his eyes? Were not the very regions of future existence already within the reach of one of his senses? Why might they not yet be within the reach of all? Of course, I do not give you all the vague conceptions which passed through my mind; but the permanence, grandeur, and astonishing multitude, of those bright worlds, impressed themselves on me with a new force. I had known all those things before, but on this night I felt them. My next thoughts were, of the power, the wisdom, and the majesty of that mightiest of Beings, by whom all those had been formed, moved, and sustained through thousands of years. I need not follow the history of my conversion; for a conversion it was. When I looked round me on the sleeping troops, I saw nothing but clods of the valley; gallant hearts, but as insensible to their high inheritance as the chargers they rode. My heart was moved towards them; and perhaps, in some subsequent instances, I succeeded in giving them my own ideas. But Austria defies, at least, all human change; I was not a fanatic, and I had no wish to strive with impossibilities. At length, I sent in my resignation; abandoned the most tempting of all human pursuits, and returned to England to be, what you see me now."

With this man I could have no reserves, and I freely asked his advice, on the plunge which I was about to make into that fathomless tide of good and ill, the world. I mentioned the Church, as the profession "which my mother had suggested," but "for which I did not conceive either my temper or my habits suitable."

"You are right, then, in abandoning the idea altogether," was the answer; "and yet I know no profession more capable of employing all the energies of a vigorous mind. I am not now talking of mitres; they can fall to but few. I speak of the prospects which it opens to all; its power of exerting the largest influence for the highest purposes; the possession of fame without its emptiness, and the indulgence of knowledge without its vanity; passion turned to the most practical and lofty uses of man; and the full feast of an ambition, superior to the tinsel of the world, and alike pure in its motives, magnificent in its views, and immeasurable in its rewards."

"And yet," said I, naming one or two of our clerical slumberers, "the profession seems not to be, in all instances, a very disturbing one."

"Those men," was the answer, "would have been slumberers at the bar, in the senate, or in the field. I may be prejudiced in favour of the choice which I have made, so long since, and which I have never found reason to repent. But I have not the slightest wish to prejudice any other one in its favour. There is no profession, which more requires a peculiar mind—a spirit of contentment, with whatever consciousness of being overlooked; of patience, with whatever hope-

lessness of distinction; of labour, for the sake of duty; and of learning, with few to share, few to admire, and fewer still to reward."

"If my father had lived," said I, "it was his intention to have tried my chance in diplomacy."

"Probably enough; for he had figured in that line himself. I remember him Secretary of embassy at Vienna. Perhaps you will scarcely believe, that I, too, have had my experience on the subject? Accident once made me an attaché to our envoy at Naples. The life is not a severe one. Idleness was never more effectively reduced to a system, than among the half dozen functionaries, to whom the interests of the British empire were entrusted in the capital of the Lazzaroni. As the Frenchman said of the Academy, 'We had nothing to do, and we did it in perfection.'"

"Italy is the land of pleasure, and the Lazzaroni are its philosophers," I observed; "but one cannot sleep like them in the face of day, and all day long. Let what will come, I have no desire to be a weed upon the waters."

"No; we had our occupations too: for we had the attendance on the court days; a business of as much formality, as if the fate of mankind depended on its performance. Then we had the attendance on the opera at night; a matter nearly as tiresome. The post from England reached Naples but once a week, and scarcely once a month conveyed any intelligence that was worth the carriage. But, if politics were out of the question, we had negotiation in abundance; for we carried on the whole diplomacy of the opera-house in London, engaged *primo tenores*, and settled

the rival claims of *prima donnas;* gave our critical opinions on the merits of dancers worthy of appearing before the British *cognoscenti;* and dispatched poets, ballet-masters, and scene-painters, to our managers, with an activity worthy of the purest patriotism.—Well; what think you of the bar?"

"I have no head for its study; and no heart for its employment."

"Yet it leads more rapidly to rank than any other profession under the sun; profit beyond counting, and a peerage. Those are no bad things."

"Both capital, if one could be secure of them. But they take too much time, for me. I never was born to sit on the woolsack. On the whole, if I were to follow my own inclination, I should be a soldier."

I have already said, that I have been, throughout life, a kind of believer in omens. I have seen such a multitude of things decided by some curious coincidence, some passing occurrence, some of those seeming trifles for which it is impossible to account, but which occur at the instant when the mind is wavering on the balance; that I feel no wonder at the old superstitions, of guessing our destiny from the shooting of a star, or the flight of a bird. While we were rambling onward, discussing the merits and demerits of the profession of arms, we heard the winding of the mail-guard's horn. I sprang the fence, and waited by the road side, to inquire the last news from the metropolis. It was momentous; the Revolution had fearfully broken out. "Paris was in an uproar—The king's guards had taken up arms for the people—The Bastile was stormed!"

If I had hesitated before, this news would have decided me; not that I pretend to have even dreamed of the tremendous changes which were to be produced in the world by the convulsion. But it struck me, as the beginning of a time, when the lazy quietude of years was about to be broken up, and room made for all who were inclined to exert themselves. Before we had reached the level lawns and trim parterres which showed us the lights of the family festivity, I had settled all the difficulties, which might impede the career of less fortunate individuals; time and chance were managed with the adroitness of a projector; and if Bellona had been one of the Nine Muses, my speculations could not have been more poetical. Somewhat to my surprise, they received no check from my venerable tutor; quite the contrary. The singular sympathy with which he listened to my most dashing conceptions, would have betrayed his early history, if I had still the knowledge to acquire. His very looks, as he listened to my rhodomontades; recurred to me, when I read, many years after, Scott's fine description of his soldier-monk, in the Lay of the Last Minstrel:—

"Again on the knight look'd the churchman old,
And again he sighed heavily,
For he had himself been a warrior bold,
And fought in Spain and Italy.
And he thought on the days that were long gone by,
When his limbs were strong and his courage was high."

The news from France produced a sensation throughout England, totally indescribable at the present day. Every tongue and every heart was full of it, for it offered something for every mind of the mil-

lion to seize on—like the waterspout; such as I have seen it, sweeping over the bosom of the Atlantic, half descending from the skies, and half ascending from the deep; every second man whom one met gave it credit for a different origin, some looking at the upper portion and some at the lower; while, to the dread of all, the huge phenomenon was blackening, gathering, and rushing onward, threatening to turn all above into darkness, and all below into storm. It made the great subject of parliamentary eloquence, and parliament was never more eloquent; it filled the speeches of the factious, and faction was never more daring; it was hailed by the shout of the multitude, and it disturbed the fireside with fear and hope, with wishing and wonder. It must be acknowledged, that a vast quantity of this excitement was absolute folly; but, at the same time, there was a sincerity in the folly which redeemed it from ridicule. Nothing could be more evident, than that French patriotism was as theatrical, in the countless majority of instances, as the loves and sorrows of its stage. Yet, however the speeches might be got by heart, or the frippery and actors hired, the *drame* was powerfully performed; and all Europe sat by, giving it the tribute of its tears, or its terrors. Even in England, with all our recollection, that the heroes were some of the most reckless villains in existence; the multitude gave themselves up to the illusion. I liked excitement, wherever it was to be found. The barriers to distinction were still too firmly closed against the younger son of an embarrassed family, not to suggest many a wish for whatever chance

might burst the gate, or blow up the rampart. Our great schools fill all our heads with the superb fanaticism of the Brutuses and Catos, and the splendid hypocrisies of Demosthenes and Cicero. The boy who is not a republican on leaving their gates, has neither heart nor head. Time, trial, and the world, alone rectify those extravagancies. My first effort in political life was a harangue to the rabble of the next borough, conceived in the most Gallic style. Yet this act of absurdity had the effect of forwarding my views, more rapidly than if I had become an aristocratic Chatham. My speech was so much applauded by the mob, that they began to put its theories in practice; though with rather more vigour than I had dreamed of. There were riots, and even some attempts at the seizure of arms; and the noble duke, our neighbour, received a threatening letter, which sent him at full gallop to the Home Secretary. A note, by no means too gentle in its tone, was instantly despatched to my noble brother, inquiring why he did not contrive to keep the minor branches of his family in better order, and threatening him with the withdrawal of the county patronage. My demand of a commission in the army was now no longer answered by the head of our house, with astonishment at the loftiness of my expectations, and statements of the utter emptiness of the family exchequer. The result of his brief correspondence with Downing-street was a letter, notifying that "his majesty was pleased to accept of my services in a regiment of the Guards."

I was enraptured, and my brother was also en-

raptured, for we had both gained our objects. I had got rid of him, and *ennui*. He had got rid of me, and the displeasure of the grand dispensers of place and pension. No time was lost in forwarding me to make my bow at the Horse Guards; and my noble brother lost as little time in making me put my hand to a paper, in which, for prompt payment, I relinquished one half of my legacy. But, what cared I for money? I had obtained a profession, in which money was contemptible, the only purse the military chest, and the only prize, like Nelson's, a "peerage, or Westminster Abbey." The ferment did not cool within the week; and within that period, I had taken leave of half the county, been wished laurels and aiguillettes by a hundred, or a thousand, of the fairest of our country belles; and been wished a thousand miles off by the wise matrons, to whom the sight of a "younger son without house or land" is as great a nuisance, as a kite among a family of pigeons.

At that moment, however, all their dovecots were secure. I should not have spent a sigh on the Venus de Medicis, had she sprung from her pedestal, to enchant me. The world was before me; and trite and trifling objects were no longer to occupy my time. I felt like one who, after wandering for days through the depths of an American forest, suddenly reaches its border, and sees before him the boundless prairie; with its boundlessness still more striking, from the absence of any distinct object on which the eye could rest. What were horses, dogs, and country dinners, to the world of London and of life; which now came in full, and, I will own it, extravagant,

vision before me? The ideas which I conceived of men and things, of my own fortunes, and the fortunate exercise of my own powers, were of an order which, in my calmer days, has often made me smile: yet what is the whole early life of man but a predisposition to intellectual fever? and I was then throbbing on the fiery verge of the disease.

CHAPTER III.

"See, my lord,
Would you not deem it breath'd, and that those veins
Did verily bear blood?"
"Masterly done!
The fixture of her eye has motion in't.
Are we not mocked with art? What fine chisel
Could ever yet cut breath?"

SHAKSPEARE.

I SHALL say but little of my first sensations on reaching London. My eyes and ears were in full activity. But the impression upon all who enter this most prodigious of capitals for the first time, is nearly the same. Its perpetual multitude, its incessant movement, its infinite variety of occupations, sights, and sounds, the echo of the whole vast and sleepless machinery of national existence, have been a thousand times the subject of description, and always of wonder. Yet, I must acknowledge, that its first sight repelled me. I had lived in field and forest, and delighted in the freshness and beauty of nature. I had lived in stately halls, and been surrounded by bowing attendants; and now—with my mind full of the calm magnificence of English noble life, I felt myself

flung into the midst of a numberless, miscellaneous, bustling crowd, all rushing on, regardless of every thing but themselves. I had before my glance, myriads of anxious and eager human beings pouring on for ever, through endless lines of gloomy-looking houses; and I, nothing, an atom in the chaos, a grain of dust on the great chariot wheel of society, a lonely and obscure struggler in the mighty current of human life, which rolled along the sullen channels of the most cheerless, though the most majestic, capital of the globe.

For the first week, I was absolutely unable to collect my thoughts. All that I learned was, to make my way through the principal thoroughfares, and know the names of their chief buildings. In later days, I took a more practical view of things, and regarded them only, as places in which the business of the hour was to be done. But, in my first view, something of the romance and revival of my forest walks clung to me. I remember that, when I first saw the Horse Guards; to which, of course, one of my earliest visits was paid; I found no slight difficulty in thinking of it, as only a remarkably clownish mass of brick and stone, crowded with clerks. To my excited imagination, it was—the very palace of war; the stern spot from which the thunderbolts of England were to be launched; the centre and the stronghold of that irresistible influence with which England sways and moulds mankind. The India House was another of my reveries. I could not think of it, as merely a huge pile in a vulgar outlet of the city, a place of porters and messengers loitering in gloomy corridors, of busy clerks for ever scribbling,

in nooks unvisited by the sun, or even of opulent directors, congregating in halls encrusted with the cobwebs of centuries. To my eyes it was invested with the mystery and the dignity of Orientalism. I thought only of the powers by which rajahs were raised and overthrown, of the mandates which spread war and restored peace over regions as wide as Europe. I had rambling visions of armies of elephants, superb cavalry, and chieftains covered with gold and diamonds. As I traversed the dusky halls, I dreamed of the will, which had pronounced the fate of kingdoms; the fallen glories of Aurengzebe, the broken sceptre of the Mahratta, and the crushed tiara of Mysore. Round me was the moving power of an empire, the noblest that the East has ever seen; and which, in the act of assuming additional greatness, was, by a contradiction to all the laws of extended conquest, hourly assuming additional stability.

And yet, were not those fantasies the truth after all? Are the effects to be forgotten in the instruments, or is it not the result, which forms the character of the whole? Are we to think of the dagger which strikes the master of a throne, merely as a blade in the hand of an assassin; or as the summoner to the rise, or subversion, of thrones? Is the pen which shoots political flame through the hearts of living millions, or sheds the splendours of poetry over millions to come, to be valued only as the feather of a bird? Or is the press itself, to be remembered only as a dexterous combination of springs and screws; or to be bowed down to, as the steward of all the hidden treasures of mind; as the breaker of intel-

lectual chains, the avenger of injured rights, the moral Hercules, that goes forth turning the wilderness into fertility, and smiting the monsters of the world?

Among the wonders of the time, there was one; which struck me with prodigious force, which has remained on my recollection to this hour, and which still survives with undiminished vividness. It was the acting of Siddons.

The stage is now almost undone. The absurd liberalism of the day has given every corner of London a theatre, and has degraded the character of the stage in all. By scattering the ability which still exists, it has stripped the great theatres of the only means of sustaining dramatic excellence; while, by adopting temporary expedients, to obtain temporary success, it has driven away English dramatic genius, in contempt, or despair. Our stage is now condemned to be fed like our paupers; and, like our paupers, to feel a stigma in every morsel which it puts within its lips. It must stoop to French frivolity, or German extravagance, and be glad to exist upon either. Yet, why should not higher means come to its aid? Why should not the State relieve the difficulties of a great institution, which might be made to repay its assistance a thousand-fold? Is there nothing that could be withdrawn from the prodigality of civil lists, or the pomp of public establishments, to restore, to purify, and even to exalt, the stage? The people *will* have theatres. Good or evil, noble or degraded, the stage will be demanded by the people. Is it a thing indifferent to our rulers, to supply them with this

powerful and universal excitement in its highest degree of moral influence; to bring before them, with all the attractions of the drama, the memory of heroes and sages, of patriots and martyrs; or leave them to rake for the indulgence of eye and ear, in the very kennels of crime?

"They order those things better in France."

Unquestionably. The care of Government there protects the national taste, and prevents the theatres from looking for subsistence to the history of the highway. The vices which *may* haunt theatres, are no more necessary to their nature, than to the senate or the palace. But, why should not the State interpose to prevent scandals on the stage, as in the streets? And why should it not offer prizes and honours for great tragedies and great comedies, as it would for a voyage to the Arctic or Antarctic? But—"dramatic genius is dead in England!" What? in England! where nothing dies—where every faculty of the heart and understanding, is in perpetual activity—where the noblest impulses are perpetually pushing man forward to the noblest ends—above all, where human nature moves in all its ardour, singularity, and truth, from hour to hour, without disguise—where the whole anatomy of the moral frame is visible, and all its weaknesses, and all its wonders, are the daily spectacle of all mankind!

In giving those opinions of the capabilities of the stage; need I guard them by saying, that I contemplate a higher spirit than the drama even of Shakspeare has ever displayed—one which, to the vigour of his characters, and the splendours of his poetry,

should add a moral, of which his time was scarcely conscious. My idea would approach more nearly to the achievements of the great Greek dramas; in which the finest sympathies of the people were appealed to by the most powerful recollections of historic virtue;—the most brilliant ability summoning before the popular eye, with all the charm of poetry and music, the remembrance of their national triumphs over the Persian; the dazzling conceptions of their Olympus, and solemn visions of their departed sages and heroes; the glories of their national power, and the prospects of their imperishable renown. I contemplate nothing of the weakness, locality, or licence, of our old drama. I think only, of a rich and vivid combination of characters above the level of our time, thoughts belonging to that elevation, feelings more generous, glowing, and majestic, and exploits uniting the soaring spirit of old romance with the sustained strength of modern energy ;—Greece in her brightest days of intellectual lustre, Rome in her most heroic days of patriotism, and England anticipating those days which are yet to come, and which shall yet fill up her inheritance of glory.

Siddons was then witching the world—witching, in its more solemn sense; for though her smile was exquisite, she might have sat for the picture of a Sybil or a Pythoness. The stage had never seen her equal, and will probably never see another, so completely formed to command all its influences. Yet her beauty, her acting, and even her movement, were characteristic, and their character was noble melancholy. I never saw so mournful a countenance, com-

bined with so much beauty. Her voice, though grand, was melancholy—her air, though superb, was melancholy; her very smile was melancholy; and yet there was so much of living intellect in her expression; such vast variety of conception in her look and gesture; she so deeply awoke the feelings, or so awfully impressed the mind, that in scenes the most remote from this characteristic of her countenance and her genius, in warlike triumph, in royal grandeur, in the ecstasies of joy, or in the abandonment of the heart to passion; she ruled the stage, and made the actress be wholly forgotten, in the strong reality of the hour.

In this language, there is not the slightest exaggeration. I have seen the audience burst into tears, at a single tone of her voice. Her natural conception was so fine, that the merest commonplace often received a living spirit from her lips. I have seen a single glance from her powerful eye hush an audience—I have seen her acting sometimes startle and bewilder even the actors beside her. There is perhaps a genius for every art, and hers was the genius of the stage—a faculty of instant communication between the speaker and the hearer;—some unaccountable sympathy, the power to create which belongs but to one in millions; and which, where it exists, raises its possessor to the height of the art at once, and constitutes perfection.

It may be easily presumed, that I saw this extraordinary being, whenever it was possible. But her *chef-d'œuvre*, in my eyes, was the "wife of Macbeth." The part seemed made for her, by something of that instinct, which in olden times combined the poet

and the prophet in one. It had the grandeur and loftiness, mingled with the solemnity and mystery, which especially belonged to the character of her beauty.

Such was the power of her performance in this part, that probably, if a thousand described it; each would mark some peculiar trait, yet all feel the same admiration.—She entered, with Macbeth's letter in her hand; her step was hurried, as if she had but just glanced over the letter, and had been eager to escape from the crowd of attendants, to reperuse it alone. She then read on, in a firm, calm voice, until she came to the passage which proved the supernatural spirit of the prediction. "They have more in them than mortal knowledge. When I burnt with desire to question them further, they made themselves into *air*, and—*vanished!*" As she was about to pronounce the last words, she paused, drew a short breath, her whole frame seemed disturbed, she threw her fine eyes upwards, and exclaimed "*Vanished!*" with a wild force, which showed that the whole force of the temptation had struck into her soul. The "Hail, king that shall be!" was the winding-up of the spell. It was pronounced with the grandeur of one already by anticipation a Queen.

Her solitary summons to her distant lord followed, like an Incantation—

> "Hie thee hither,
> That I may pour my spirits in thine ear;
> And chastise with the valour of my tongue
> All that impedes thee from the golden round."

The murder scene was the next triumph: her acting was that of a triumphant fiend. I must follow

those recollections no further; but the most admirable piece of silent acting that perhaps ever was conceived, was her "banquet scene." That scene, from the terrible business in front; the entrance of Banquo's ghost, the horrors of Macbeth, stricken in the moment of his royal exultation, and the astonishment and alarm of the courtiers; is one of the most thrilling and tumultuous. Yet Siddons, sitting at the extremity of the royal hall, not having a syllable to utter, and simply occupied with courtesies to her guests, made her silence so expressive, that she more than divided the interest with the powerful action, on the stage. And when finally, indignant at Macbeth's terrors, agitated by her own consciousness, that the powers of evil were at work; and alarmed at the result of an up-breaking of the banquet, with such rumours in the general ear; she rushed towards her unhappy husband, and stung him with the words, though but whispered, yet intensely poured into his passive sense—

> "Are you a *man?*
> This is the very *painting* of your fear!
> This is the *air-drawn* dagger, which, you said,
> Led you to Duncan!—
> Why do you make *such* faces? When all's done,
> You look but on *a stool!*"

She instantly engrossed the audience and the action. Scorn and sympathy never spoke with such deep and mingled emphasis before. In those accents all else was absorbed.

But, her sleep-walking scene! When shall we see its "second or its similar?" Nothing so mystic, nothing so awful, was ever seen upon the stage. Yet,

if it had a fault—it was too awful. She more resembled a majestic shade rising from the tomb, than a living woman, however disturbed by wild fear and lofty passion. It is a remarkable instance of the genius of Shakspeare, that he here found the means of giving a human interest, to a being whom he had almost exalted to the "bad eminence" of a magnificent fiend. In this famous soliloquy, the thoughts which once filled and fired the wife of Macbeth have totally vanished. Ambition has died; remorse lives in its place. The diadem has disappeared; she thinks only of the blood that stains her for ever. She is the queen no more, but an exhausted and unhappy woman; worn down by the agonies of conscience, and with her frame dying by the disease of her soul.

But Siddons wanted the affliction, the drooping, the timidity, of woman. She looked a living statue. She spoke, with the solemn tone of a voice from a shrine. She stood more like the sepulchral avenger of regicide, than the sufferer from its convictions. Her grand voice, her fixed and marble countenance, her silent and stately step, gave the impression of a supernatural being, the genius of an ancient oracle—a royal Nemesis.

I have seen all the great tragedians of our time; but I have never seen an equal to this extraordinary actress. I have seen beauty, youth, touching sensibility, and powerful conception; but I never saw so complete an union of them all—and that union was the sublime. Shakspeare must have had some such form before his "mind's eye," while he

was creating the wife of Macbeth.—Some magnificent and regal countenance, some embodying of native majesty, some imaginary Siddons. He could not have gone beyond the true. She was a living Melpomene!

CHAPTER IV.

"Hath not a Jew eyes, hath not a Jew hands, organs, dimensions, senses, affections, passions; fed with the same food, hurt with the same weapon, subject to the same diseases, treated by the same means—warmed and cooled by the same winter and summer as the Christian?"—SHAKSPEARE.

THE business of the War-Office was not transacted in those days with the despatch, subsequently introduced by the honest Duke of York. After a delay of weeks, I found myself still ungazetted, grew sad, angry, impatient; and after some consideration on the various modes of getting rid of *ennui*, which were to be found—in enlisting in the service of that great company which extended its wings from Bombay to Bengal; as the orators said, impudently enough, like the vulture covering his prey; or, in taking the chance of fortune, in the shape of cabin-boy on board one of the forest of ships that were daily floating down the Thames; and making my way to the extremities of the earth; or in finishing my fretful speculations in a cold bath at the bottom of the Thames itself; I did, what I believed to be a severer exertion than any of them—I wrote a full and true statement of my vexations to my lordly brother.

His answer was lordly enough. He had been "so much occupied with the numberless duties devolving upon him as landlord, magistrate, lord-lieutenant, 'and fifty other things,' that he absolutely had not been able to find a moment to think of me;" and, what was rather more perplexing to my immediate sensibilities, "he had not been able to send me a shilling. However,—he did all that he could, in giving me a note to a particular friend, Mr. Elisha Mordecai, of Moorfields."

There is nothing which quickens a man's movements, like a depletion of the purse; and thus, instead of lounging at my hotel, until the morning paper brought me the scandals and pleasantries of the day before, fresh for my breakfast-table; I threw myself out of bed, at an hour, which I should not have ventured to mention to any man with whom I walked arm-in-arm in St. James's-street; and made my way, in a hackney coach, to avoid the possibility of being recognised, to the dwelling of my new patron.

I make no attempt to describe the navigation through which I reached him; it was winding and dark beyond all description, and gave me the idea of the passages of a dungeon, or perhaps more completely, of a Cornish mine, than of the ways of a great city. And in a hovel worthy to finish such a voyage of discovery, I discovered Mr. Elisha Mordecai, the man of untold opulence. For a while, on being ushered into the office, where he sat pen in hand; I was utterly unable to ascertain any thing of him, beyond a gaunt thin outline, which sat crouching behind a pile of papers, and beneath a small window covered with the dust of

ages. In his dungeon, he gave me the impression of one of those toads which are found from time to time in blocks of coal, and have lain there unbreathing and unmoving, since the deluge. However, he was a man of business, and so was I, for the moment. I handed him my brother's note; and like a ray of sunshine on the torpid snake, it put him into immediate motion. He now took off his spectacles, as if to indulge himself with a view of me by the naked eye; and after a scrutinizing look, which, in another place and person, I should probably have resented as impertinent, but which here seemed part of the profession; he rose from his seat, and ushered me into another apartment. This room was probably his place of reception for criminals of a more exalted order; for it was lined with foreign prints, and had one or two tolerable Dutch pictures, and a bookcase. Out of the bookcase he took down a folio, examined it, compared the writing of my credentials with the signatures of a ledger; which, as Cromwell's son said of his trunk, contained the lives and fortunes, or at least that on which depended the lives and fortunes, of half the noble *roués* of England, their "promises to pay," bonds, mortgages, and post-obits; and then performed the usual operation on myself.—My 2500*l.* in prospect, was mulcted of a tenth, for the trouble of realizing it; of another tenth for prompt payment; and of another for expediting the affair of my commission. "A second such victory would have ruined me."

However, I bore the torture well. At that time, I had so little regard for any object, but the grand one

of wearing a sword and epaulette, that, if Mordecai had demanded the whole sum, in tenths, I should have scarcely winced. But my philosophy stood me in good part; for it won a grim smile from the torturer, and even a little of his confidence.

"This," said he, running his finger down a list, which looked endless, "I call my peerage book." Turning to another of equal dimensions, "there lies my House of Commons.—Not quite as many words wasted in it, as in the honourable house, but rather more to the purpose."

Mordecai now grew facetious; the feeling that he had made a handsome morning's work, put him in spirits, and he let me into some of the secrets of high life; with the air of a looker-on who sees the whole game, and also intends to pocket the stakes of the parties on both sides. "Money, Mr. Marston," said my hook-nosed and keen-eyed enlightener, "is the true business of man. It is philosophy, science, and patriotism in one; or, at least, without it, the whole three are but of little service.—Your philosopher dies in a garret, your man of science hawks telescopes, and your patriot gets himself hanged in honour of the 'rights of man.'—I have known all those things, for I was born a German, and bred among the illustrissimi of a German university. But I determined not to live a beggar, or at least not to die one. I left Gottingen behind me, on a summer morning, and trudged, fought, and 'borrowed' my way to London. —What I am now, you see."

Probably, the glance which I involuntarily gave round the room, did not exhibit much admiration.

"Ha," said he, with a half smile, which, on his gigantic and sullen features, looked like a smile on one of the sculptures of a mausoleum, "you judge by appearances.—Let me give you one piece of advice: If the Italian said, 'distrust words, they are fit only to disguise thoughts,' take a Londoner's warning, and distrust eyes—they are only fit to pretend to see." I laughed, and said something of Machiavelli. A sneer rippled over his stern visage; and he honoured me for the adroitness of my imagination. "I must see more of you, Mr. Marston," said he, "and you will probably, not think me quite the wolf, that I seem, in this den." He paused a moment, and turned over some memorandums. "I find," said he, "by these papers, that I shall have occasion to leave town, in the beginning of next week. You shall then see how I live.—It is not through want of a liking for light and air, that I hut here. I am a German. I have seen plains and mountains in my time. If I had been a fool, there I should have remained, a boar-hunter; if I were a fool here, I should act like others of the breed, and be a fox-hunter. But I had other game in view, and now, I could sell many a noble estate, have many an 'honourable' at my levee, break up an old loan, buy up a new one, and shake the credit of any thing, but, perhaps—the Bank of England."

This was bold speaking, and at another time I should have doubted it; but the times were bold, the language of the streets was bold, the country was bold, and I, too, was bold. There was also something singular in the speaker; even the hovel round him had a look, which added to his influence. I listened to

the Jew, as one might listen to a revealer of those secrets which find an echo in every bosom, when they are once discovered; and on which still deeper secrets seem to depend. My acquiescence, not the less effective for its being expressed more in looks than in words, warmed even the stern spirit of the Israelite towards me, and he actually went the length of ordering some refreshments to be put on the table. We ate and drank together; a new source of cordiality. Our conversation continued long, and it ended in my acceptance of his invitation to his villa at Brighton; which he termed "a small thing, simply for a week's change of air," and where he promised to give me some curious explanations of his theory—"that money was the master of all things, men, manners, and opinions."

On one of the finest mornings of autumn, in fulfilment of my promise to the Jew, I mounted the box of the "Royal Sussex Stage."

I had full leisure to admire the country, for our progress occupied nearly the whole day. We now laugh at our slow-moving forefathers; yet, may not the time be coming, when our thirty miles an hour will be laughed at as much as their five? when, our passage from Calais to Dover will be made by the turn of a winch, and Paris will be within the penny-post delivery? when, the balloon will carry our letters and ourselves; until that still more expeditious period, when we shall ride on cannon-shot, and make but a stage from London to Pekin?

On the roof of the coach I found a strong-featured and closely wrapped-up man, who, by degrees, per-

formed the part of my cicerone. His knowledge of the localities was perfect; "every bush and bosky dell," every creek and winding, as the shore came in sight, was so familiar to him, that I should have set him down at once for a smuggler; but for a superiority of tone in his language, and still more from the evident deference paid to him by the coachman, in those days a leading authority with all the passengers. But the coachman's occupation is now nearly o'er. Fire and water have swept him away. His broad back, his broad grin, and his broad buttons, are now but recollections.

My new acquaintance exhibited as perfect a knowledge of the country residents, as of its map; and nothing could be more unhesitating than his opinions of them all, from the prince "and his set," as he termed them, to Mordecai himself. Of my Jew friend, he said, with a laugh, "There is not a better friend to the King's Bench in all England. If you have any thing to lose, he will strip you on the spot. If you have nothing, you may escape; unless he can make something by having you hanged." I begged of him to spare "my new friend." "Why," said he, "he is one of my oldest friends, and one of the cleverest fellows alive. I speak tenderly of him, from admiration of his talents. I have a liking for the perfection of a screw. He is a superb fellow. You will find his 'Hermitage,' as he calls it, a pond of gold fish. But, all this you will soon learn for yourself." The coach now stopped on a rising ground, which showed the little fishing village of Brighton beneath us, basking in the glow of sunset.

My cicerone got down, and bade me farewell. On enquiring his name from my fellow-travellers, a group of Sussex farmers; I found a general disinclination to touch on the subject. Even the coachman, the established source of information on all topics, exhibited no wish to discuss the stranger; his official loquacity was almost dumb.—" He merely—believed, that he was something in the navy, or in the army, or in something or other;—but he was often in those parts, and generally travelled to London by the Royal Sussex Stage." I could obtain no more.

No country in Europe has changed its appearance more strikingly than the greater part of England during the last fifty years. Sussex was then as wild as the wildest heath of Yorkshire. The population, too, looked as wild as the landscape. This was once the very land of the bold smuggler; the haunt of the dashing defier of the custom-house officer; the element of the amphibious animal, to whom storms were native, and ankers of right Nantz a provision of nature. The channel was his Hellespont, and Aquavitæ the name of the nymph that drew him nightly across the surge.

We passed groups of men, who, though they had not the sailor's dress, had the sailor's look; some trudging along the road-side, evidently not in idleness; others mounted on the short rough horse of the country; and all knowing and known by our laconic coachman.

On our passing one group, leaning with their backs against one of the low walls which seemed the only enclosure of this rugged region; I, half in earnest,

half-laughingly, hinted to one of my neighbours, a giant of a rough-headed farmer, that "perhaps a meeting with such a party, at a later hour, might be inconvenient; especially if the traveller had a full purse." The fellow turned on me a countenance of ridicule. "What?" said he, "do you take them for robbers? Heaven bless you, my lad, they could buy the stage, —horses, passengers, and all. I'll warrant you, they will have news from over there," and he pointed towards France, "long enough before it gets into the newspapers. Why, they are the richest fellows in the county."

"Are they smugglers?" I asked, with a boyish want of tact.

"Why, no," was the answer, with a leer. "We have nothing of that breed among us; we are all honest men. But, suppose a man has an acquaintance abroad, and gets a commission to sell a cargo of tea, or half a hundred kegs of spirits, or perhaps, has a present from a friend—who shall hinder him from going to bring it? I'm sure, not I."

It was evidently not the "etiquette" on the roof of the Royal Sussex to talk much on the subject; and, before my curiosity could reach the length of actual imprudence, the coachman pulled up, and informed me that I had reached the nearest turn to "the Hermitage." My valise was lowered down, a peasant was found to carry it, and I plunged into the depth of a defile, as primitive as if it had been a path in Siberia.

It was brief, however, and in a few minutes I was within sight of the villa. Here, I at once discovered

that Mordecai was a man of taste; perhaps the very roughness of the Sussex jungle, through which I had just passed, had been suffered to remain, for the sake of contrast. A small lodge, covered with late blooming roses, let me into a narrow avenue of all kinds of odorous shrubs; the evening sun was still strong enough to show me glimpses of the grounds on either side, and they had all the dressed smoothness of a parterre. The scene was so different from all that wearied me during the day, that I felt it with double enjoyment; and the utter solitude and silence, after the rough voices of my companions in the journey, were so soothing; that I involuntarily paused, before I approached the house; to refresh not more my senses than my mind. As I stood, leaning against a tree, and baring my hot brain and bosom to the breeze, that rose with delicious coolness, I heard music. It was a sweet voice, accompanied at intervals by some skilful touches of a harp; and, from the solemnity of the measure, I supposed it to be a hymn.—But who was the minstrel? Mordecai had never mentioned to me either wife or daughter. But, at all events, the song was sweet. The minstrel was evidently a woman, and the Jew's household promised me more amusement, than I could have expected from the man of Moorfields. The song ceased, the charm was broken, and I moved on; fully convinced that I had entered on a scene where I might expect, at least, novelty; and the expectation was then enough, to have led me to the cannon's mouth, or the antipodes.

My entertainer received me with more civility than

I had expected. He was almost fashionably dressed; his grim features were smoothed into an elaborate smile; and he repeated his gratification at seeing me, in such variety of tones, that I began to doubt the cordiality of my reception. But I could have no doubt, of the elegance of the apartment into which I was shown. All was foreign, even to the flowers in the vases that filled the windows. A few bas-reliefs in the most finished style; a few alabasters as bright as if they had been brought at the moment from Carrara; a few paintings of the Italian masters, if not original and of the highest value, at least first-rate copies—caught the eye at once: the not *too* much, the not *too* little, that exact point which it requires so much skill to touch, showed that the hand of taste had been every where; and I again thought of the dungeon in the city, and asked myself whether it was possible, that Mordecai could be the worker of the miracle.

Naturally, making him some acknowledgments for his invitation, and saying some civil thing of his taste, he laughed, and replied, "*I* have but little merit in the matter. All this is my daughter's. Moorfields is *my* house; this is Mariamne's house. As our origin and connexions are foreign, we make use of our opportunities, to indulge ourselves in these foreign trifles. But we have a little '*réunion*' of our neighbours this evening, and I must first make you known to the lady of the *fête*." He rang the bell.

"Neighbours!" said I; "all round me, as I came, seemed solitude; and yours is so beautiful, that I almost think, society would impair its beauty."

"Well, well, Mr. Marston, you shall see. But this I advise you, take care of your heart, to-night, if you are susceptible of admiration for French women."

A servant announced, that his mistress would attend us in a few minutes; and I remained examining the pictures and the prospect; when a lively voice, and the opening of a door, made me turn round to pay my homage to the lady. I had made up my mind to see one of the stately figures and solemn countenances, which are so often to be found in the higher orders of the daughters of Israel. I saw, on the contrary, one of the gayest faces and lightest figures imaginable; the *petit nez retroussé*, and altogether much more the air of a pretty Parisian than one of the superb race of Zion. Her manner was as animated as her eyes, as, with the ease of foreign life she entered into conversation; and in a few minutes we laughed and talked together, as if we had been acquaintances from our cradles.

Her history of the house was simply, that "she hated town and loved the country; that she loved the sea better than the land; and loved society of her own selection better than society forced upon her.—On the sea-shore she found all that she liked, and escaped all that she disliked; and she therefore lived on the sea-shore.—She had persuaded her father to build that house, and they had furnished it, according to their own recollections, and even their own whims.—Caprice was liberty, and liberty was essential to the enjoyment of every thing. Thus, she loved caprice, and laid herself open to the charge of being fantastic, with those who did not *understand* her."

In this sportive way she ran on, saying all kinds of lively nothings; while we drank our coffee out of Saxon porcelain, which would have shone on the table of a crowned head.

The windows were thrown open, and we sat enjoying the noblest of all scenes, a glorious sunset, to full advantage. The fragrance of the garden stole in, a "steam of rich distilled perfumes;" the song of the birds was heard, in those faint and interrupted notes which come with such sweetness in the parting day; the distant hum of the village, and the low sound of the distant waves subsiding on the beach, made a harmony of their own; perhaps more soothing and subduing than the most refined touches of human skill. We wanted nothing but an Italian moon, to realize the loveliness of the scene in Belmont.

> "The moon shines bright. In such a night as this,
> When the sweet wind did gently kiss the trees,
> And they did make no noise—in such a night
> Medea gather'd the enchanted herbs
> That did renew old Jason."

As I glanced on the little, showily dressed Jewess, sitting between her father and myself, I thought of the possibilities to come—

> "In such a night
> Did Jessica steal from the wealthy Jew,
> And, with an unthrift love, did run from Venice."

We soon after had the moon herself, rising broad and bright from the ocean; and all was romance; until a party were seen coming up the avenue, laughing and talking very sportively.

"I beg a thousand apologies; but I had forgotten

to mention, that we have a small party this evening, chiefly foreign; and, as you perceive, our friends keep early hours," said the Jessica, rising to receive them.

"They are French, and emigrants," added Mordecai gravely. "All is over with them and theirs in France, and they have made the best of their way to England; therein acting more wisely than those who have stayed behind.—They have slipped out of the claws of the '*tigre-singe*,' as their countryman described them. These unfortunates have been consigned to me by my correspondents, like so many bales of silk, or barrels of Medoc.—I am sorry to have thus taken you by surprise; but here they come."

I certainly was not prepared for the names, which I now heard successively announced. Instead of the moderate condition, from which I had supposed Mordecai and his pretty daughter, aspiring as she was, to have chosen their society; I found myself in a circle of names of which the world had been talking, since I was in my cradle, if not for a dozen centuries before. I was in the midst of dukes, counts, and chevaliers, maréchals and marchionesses, the patrons and patronesses of the Marmontels and D'Alemberts, the charm of the Du Deffand *soirées*, and the originals for the charming piquancies and exquisite impertinences of L'Espinasse, and the *coterieisme* of Paris.

The scene was perfectly new to me, and I was delighted with its novelty.

All that I had seen of the peerage of our haughty country was dim and formal, to the gay glitter of the

crowd round me. Nature never moulded two national characters so distinct in all points; but the French exterior carries all before it. Diamonds and decorations sparkled on every side. The dresses of the women were as fashionable, as if they had never known fear or flight; and the conversation was as light, sportive, and *badinant*, as if they were all waiting in the *Oeil de Bœuf* of Versailles till the chamberlain of Marie Antoinette should signify the royal pleasure to receive them. Here was stateliness, to the very summit of human pride, but it was softened by the taste of its display; the most easy familiarity, yet guarded by the most refined distinctions. The *bon-mot* was uttered with such natural avoidance of offence, and the arch allusion was so gracefully applied, that the whole gave me the idea of a new use of language.—They were *artistes* of conversation, professors of a study of society, inventors of a poignancy, and polish of expression; as characteristic of a style, as the pencil of the Bolognese or the Venetian school.

I was amused, but I was still more deeply interested; for the chief topics of the evening were those on which public curiosity was most anxiously alive at the moment—the hazards of the revolutionary tempest, which they had left raging on the opposite shore. Yet, "Vive la France!" we had our laugh, our *calembourg*, and our songs to harp and piano, notwithstanding the shock of governments!

But, we had scarcely sat down to the supper which Mordecai's hospitality, and his daughter's taste, had provided for us; and a most costly dis-

play of plate and pine-apples it was; when our entertainer was called out of the room by a new arrival. After some delay, he returned, bringing with him a middle-aged officer, a fine soldierly-looking figure, in the uniform of the royal guard. The officer had just arrived from France, with letters for some of the party, and with an introduction to the Jew; whom I now began to regard as an agent of the French princes. The officer was known to the whole table; and the enquiries for the fate of their friends and France were incessant and innumerable. He evidently suppressed much, to avoid "a scene;" yet what he had to tell was sufficiently alarming. The ominous shake of the Jew's head, and the changes of his sagacious visage, showed me that he, at least, thought the evil day on the point of completion.

"Living," said Mordecai, "at this distance from the place of events which succeed each other with such rapidity, we can scarcely judge of any thing. But, if the king would rely more on his peasantry, and less on his populace, and more on his army than either, he might remain king of France still."

"True!—true!" was the general acclamation.

"He should have clung to his noblesse, like Henri Quatre," said a duke.

"He should have made common cause with his clergy," said a prelate, with the physiognomy of one of Titian's cardinals.

"Any thing but the Tiers Etat," was uttered by all, with a general voice of horror.

"My letters of this evening," said Mordecai, "tell

me that the *fête* at Versailles has had dangerous consequences."

"*Ciel!*" exclaimed a remarkably handsome woman of middle age, with the "air noble" in every feature. "Pardon me, it must be an error.—I was present. It was the most brilliant of all possible réunions. It was a pledge to the salvation of France. I have the sound of 'Richard, O mon Roi!' in my ears at this moment. When, oh when, shall I hear it again?" This was the Royalist song of France, taken from the celebrated Opera of "*Cœur de Lion.*"

The name was electric. All began that delicious air, at the moment. Sobs and sighs stole in between the pauses of the harmony. Their rich and practised voices gave it the sweetness and solemnity of a hymn. Fine eyes were lifted to heaven; fine faces were buried in their clasped hands; and the whole finished, like the closing of a prayer.

But, madame la duchesse was full of her subject, and we were full of curiosity. Mariamne implored her to give us some idea of a scene, of which all Europe was thinking and talking. She required no importunity, but told her tale, with the majesty of a Clairon. It was at first all exclamation. "O my king!—O my unhappy, but noble queen!—O my beloved but noble France! *O Richard! O mon Roi!—Le monde vous abandonne!*" She again wept, and all again sympathized.

"For weeks," said she, "we had been tortured at Versailles, with reports from the capital. We lived in a perpetual fever. The fury of the populace was terrible. The wretches who inflamed it, constantly

threatened to lead the armed multitude to the palace. We were almost without defence. The ministers could not be prevailed on to order the advance of the troops, and we felt our lives from hour to hour dependent on chance.

"It was my month of waiting, as lady of honour. I found the queen always firm; or, if she ever trembled, it was at the want of firmness in others. She had made up her mind for the worst, long before. She often said to me, in those revolutionary nights, when we sat listening for the sound of the cannon or the tocsin from Paris—'France is an abyss, in which the throne must sink. But sovereigns may be undone, they must not be disgraced.' The world never possessed a more royal mind.

"At length an opportunity seemed to offer of showing the true feeling of the court to the army. The regiment of Flanders had come to take its tour of service at the palace, and the *garde-du-corps* had sent them an invitation to a grand military banquet. There was nothing new, and could have been nothing suspicious, in the invitation; for it was the custom of the *garde,* on the arrival of any regiment at Versailles, to entertain them, as a commencement of mutual civility. The regiment of Flanders was a distinguished corps—but the whole army had been tampered with; and the experiment was looked on, for the first time, as a doubtful one. As if to make it still more doubtful, the invitation was extended to the national guard of Versailles."

Every eye was now fixed on the narrator, as she went on with increasing animation.

"Never was there a day of greater anxiety. We were sure of the *garde-du-corps;* but treachery was roving through France, and the banquet might only produce a collision. The entertainment, by being in the opera salon, was actually within the palace; and all the royal suite remained in the royal apartments, in fear and trembling, during the entire day.

"But, as the night advanced, the intelligence, which was brought to us every five minutes from the salon, became more tranquillizing. The coldness which had existed in the beginning between the *garde* and the troops of the line had vanished, and loyal healths, gay speeches, and charming songs succeeded. At length a gallant young lieutenant of the *garde,* in a fit of noble enthusiasm, cried—'We are all soldiers of France—we are all loyal, all happy—Why shall not our king witness our loyalty and our happiness?' The tidings were instantly conveyed to the royal apartments. The king rose; the court followed. We entered the salon. Oh, that sight!—so new, so touching, so indescribable!"

Her voice sank for a moment. But her ardent countenance spoke. We waited in silence. She recovered herself, and proceeded—

"The queen leaned on the arm of the king, the dauphin and dauphiness followed; Madame Elizabeth, that saint on earth, if ever there was one, headed the ladies of the court. All rose on our entrance; we were received with one acclamation. The sight is still before me. I had seen all that was brilliant in the courts of Europe. But that moment effaced them all. The most splendid *salle* on earth,

crowded with uniforms, all swords drawn and waving in the light, all countenances turned on the king, all one shout of triumph, loyalty, and joy! Alas! alas! was it to be the last beat of the national heart? Alas! alas! was it to be the last flash of the splendour of France; the dazzling illumination of the *catafalque* of the Bourbons; the bright burst of flame from the funeral pile of the monarchy?"

Her voice sank into silence. At length, to relieve the pause, Mordecai expressed something of a hope that the royal family slept in peace, for that one night at least.

"I really cannot tell," briskly resumed the noble narrator. "But I know that the ladies of the court did not. As the king retired, and we remained in the opera boxes to amuse ourselves a little with the display, we heard, to our astonishment, a proposal that the tables should be cleared away, and the ladies invited to a dance upon the spot. The proposal was instantly followed, by the officers climbing into the boxes, and by our tearing up our pocket-handkerchiefs to make them cockades. We descended, and danced loyally till daybreak."

"With nothing less than field-officers, I hope?" said a superb chevalier, with a superb smile.

"I hope so too," laughed the lady, "though really I can answer for nothing, but that the cotillon was excessively gay—that our partners, if not the best dancers upon earth—I always honour the *garde-du-corps*,"—and she bowed to the captain; "were the most obliged persons possible."

"Ah, but roturiers, madame!" said a stiff old duke,

with a scorn worthy of ten generations of ribands of St. Louis.

"True; it was most melancholy, when one comes to reflect upon it," said the lady, with an elevation of her alabaster shoulders to the very tips of her ears. "But, on that evening roturiers were in demand—popularity was every thing; the *bourgeoisie* of Versailles were polished by their friction against the *garde-du-corps.* And I am sure, that if the same experiment, distressing as it might be, were tried in every opera salon in the provinces, and we had longer dances and shorter harangues, more fiddles and fewer patriots, all would be well again in our 'belle France.'"

"But—your news, monsieur le capitaine," was the demand all round the table.

"I almost dread to allude to it," said the captain, "as it may seem to contradict the opinion of madame la duchesse; yet I am afraid that we shall have to regret this *fête* as one of the most disastrous events to the king." He stopped. But the interest of the time overcame all other considerations. "Ah, gallantry apart, let us hear!" was the general voice; and, with every eye instantly fixed on him, and in the midst of lips breathless with anxiety, and bosoms beating with terror at every turn of the tale, the captain gave us his fearful narrative:—

"The banquet of the 1st of October," said he, "had delighted us all; but its consequences, which, I quite agree with madame, ought to have restored peace, were fatal. It lulled Versailles into a false security; at the moment when it roused Paris into

open rebellion. The leaders of the populace, dreading the return of the national attachment to our good king, resolved to strike a blow which should shake the monarchy. Happening to be sent to Paris on duty next day, I was astonished to find every thing in agitation.—The workmen all in the streets; the orators of the Palais Royal all on their benches, declaiming in the most furious manner; crowds of women rushing along the Boulevards, singing their barbarous revolutionary songs; some even brandishing knives and carrying pikes, and all frantic against the *fête*. As I passed down the Rue St. Honoré, I stopped to listen to the harangue of a half-naked ruffian, who had made a rostrum of the shoulders of two of the porters of the Halle, and, from this moving tribune, harangued the multitude as he went along. Every falsehood, calumny, and abomination that could come from the lips of man, were poured out by the wretch before me. The sounds of 'Vive Marat!' told me his name. I afterwards heard that he lived on the profits of a low journal, in a cellar, with a gang of wretches constantly drunk, and thus was only the fitter for the rabble. He told them, that there was a conspiracy on foot to massacre the patriots of Paris; that the troops from the provinces were coming, by order of the king, to put man, woman, and child to the sword; that the *fête* at Marseilles was given to the vanguard of the army, only to pledge them to this terrible purpose; that the governors of the provinces were all in the league of blood; and that the bakers of Paris had received an order from Versailles to put poison in all their

loaves within the next twenty-four hours. 'Frenchmen,' exclaimed this livid villain, tearing his hair, and howling with the wildness of a demoniac, 'do you love your wives and children? Will you suffer them to die in agonies before your eyes? Wait, and you will have nothing to do but dig their graves. Advance, and you will have nothing to do but drive the tyrant, with his horde of priests and nobles, into the Seine. Pause, and you are massacred. Arm, and you are invincible.' He was answered by shouts of vengeance.

"I remained that night at the head-quarters of the staff of Paris, the Hôtel de Ville. I was awakened before daybreak by the sound of a drum; and, on opening my eyes, was startled by lights flashing across the ceiling of the room where I slept. Shots followed; and it was evident that there was a conflict in the streets. I buckled on my sabre hastily, and, taking my pistols, went to join the staff. I found them in the balcony in front of the building, maintaining a feeble fire against the multitude. The night was dark, cold, and stormy, and except for the sparkle of the muskets from below, and the blaze of the torches in the hands of our assailants, we could scarcely have conjectured by whom we were attacked. This continued until daylight; when we at last got sight of our enemy. Never was there a more tremendous view. Every avenue to the Place de Grève seemed pouring in its thousands and tens of thousands. Pikes, bayonets on poles, and rusty muskets, filled the eye as far as it could reach. Flags, with all kinds of atrocious inscriptions against the

king and queen, were waving in the blast; drums, horns, and every uncouth noise of the raging million filled the air. And in front of this innumerable mass pressed on a column of desperadoes, headed by a woman, or a man disguised as a woman, beating a drum, and crying out, in the intervals of every roar, 'Bread, bread!'

"To resist was evidently hopeless, or only to provoke massacre; but I had already despatched an express to the officer in command at the Tuileries, to come and save the arms and ammunition deposited at the Hôtel de Ville; and we expected the reinforcement from minute to minute. While my eyes turned, in this moment of life and death, towards the quarter from which the troops were to come, a sudden shout from the multitude made me look round; a fellow, perhaps one of the *funambules* of the Fauxbourg theatres, was climbing up to the belfry by a rope, with the agility of a monkey. His purpose was seen by us at once, and seen with fresh alarm; for, if he had been able to reach the great bell, the terrible 'tocsin' would have aroused the country for ten leagues round, and have poured a hundred thousand armed peasantry into Paris. I pointed him out to the guard, and they fired a volley at him as he swung above their heads. They missed him, the populace shouted, and the fellow, taking off his cap and waving it in triumph, still climbed on. I next fired both my pistols at him; which was the luckier of the two I cannot tell, but I saw him stagger, just as he planted his foot on the battlement; he was evidently hit, and a general yell

from the multitude told, that they saw it too; he made a convulsive spring to secure himself, fell back, lost his hold, and plunged headlong from a height of a hundred and fifty feet to the ground! Another tried the same adventure, and with the same fate; three in succession were shot; but enthusiasm or madness gave them courage, and at length half a dozen making the attempt together, the belfry was reached, and the tocsin was rung. Its effect *was* terrible. The multitude seemed to be inspired with a new frenzy of rage as they heard its clang. Every bell in Paris soon began to clang in succession. The din was deafening; the populace seemed to become more daring and desperate every moment; all was uproar. I could soon see the effect of the tocsin, in the new crowds which recruited our assailants from all sides. Their fire became heavier; still, in the spirit of men fighting for their lives, we kept them at bay, till the last cartridge was in our muskets. But, when all was despair, we saw the distant approach of the reinforcement from the Tuileries; and breathed for an instant. Yet, judge of our astonishment, when it had no sooner entered the crowd, than, instead of driving the wretches before them, we saw the soldiers scatter, mix, and actually fraternize with the *canaille;* a general scene of embracing and huzzaing followed, the shakos were placed on the heads of the rabble, the hats and caps of the rabble were hoisted on the soldiers' bayonets; and, to our horror alike at their treachery and our inevitable destruction, the troops wearing the king's uniform, pushed forward, heading

the column of insurrection. We fired our last volley, and all was over. The multitude burst into the hotel, like a torrent. All our party were either killed or wounded. For the last half hour we had not a hundred men able to pull a trigger, against a fire which poured from the streets, from the windows, and from the house-tops, on every side of the square. That any one of us escaped from the showers of bullets was a miracle. My own escape was the merest chance. On the first rush of the crowd into the hall, I happened to come in contact with one of the leaders of the party, a horrid-looking ruffian in a red cap, who roared out that he had marked me, 'for bringing down the citizen climber up the belfry.' The fellow fired his pistol so close to my face that it scorched me. In the agony of the pain I rushed on him; he drew his sabre and attempted to cut me down; but my sword anticipated him, by a blow which finished his patriotism. At the next moment, I was trampled down, and we fell together."

CHAPTER V.

"The bay-trees in our country are all withered,
And meteors fright the fixed stars of heaven;
The pale-faced moon looks bloody on the earth,
And lean-looked prophets whisper fearful change;
Rich men look sad, and ruffians dance and sing."

SHAKSPEARE.

I CAN offer but an imperfect transcript of the brave guardsman's narrative; seconded as it was by an intelligent countenance, and that national vividness of voice and gesture which often tell so much more than words. But, to describe its effect on his auditory is impossible. Every countenance was riveted on him, every change of those extraordinary scenes was marked by a new expression of every face round the table. Sighs and tears were universal evidences of the interest excited by his fearful detail. Yet, I could scarcely wonder even at their agony. They were listening to the fate of all that belonged to them by affection, loyalty, hope, and possession, on this side of the grave. Every hour was big with the destinies of their king, their relatives, and their country. On those hours, it depended, whether a deluge of blood might not roll over France, whether

the torch might not be then kindling their ancient castles, and whether they themselves might not be doomed to mendicancy in a strange land, wanderers through the earth, without a spot whereon to lay their head, fugitives for ever. Yet the anxiety for those left behind was of a still deeper dye;—the loved, the familiar, the honoured, all involved in a tide of calamity, irresistible by human strength or skill.—All so near, yet all so lost; like the crew of some noble ship hopelessly struggling with the winds and waves; within sight of the shore, within reach almost of the very voices of their friends, yet at the mercy of a tremendous element which forbade their ever treading on firm ground.

There was still much to tell; the fate of the royal family was the general question; and the remainder of the melancholy tale was given with calmer sensibility.

"When I recovered my senses, it was late in the day; and I found myself in an humble room, with only an old woman for my attendant; but, with my wounds bandaged, and every appearance of my having fallen into friendly hands. The conjecture was true. I was in the house of one of my father's *gardes de chasse;* who, having commenced tavern-keeper in the Fauxbourg St. Antoine some years back, and being a thriving man, had become a 'personage' in his section, and was now a captain of the Fédérés. Forced, *malgré,* to join the march to the Hôtel de Ville, he had seen me in the *mêlée,* and dragged me from under a heap of killed and wounded. To his recollection I probably owed my life; for the

patriots mingled plunder with their principles, stripped all the fallen, and the pike and dagger finished the career of many of the wounded. It happened, too, that I could not have fallen into a better spot for information. The *garde de chasse* was loyal, to the midriff; but his position as the master of a tavern, made his house a rendezvous of the leading patriots of his section. Immediately after their victory of the morning, a sort of council was held, on what they were to do next; and the room where I lay being separated from their assembly only by a slight partition, I could hear every syllable of their speeches; which, indeed, they took no pains to whisper. "Paris was their own." Lying on my bed, I learned, that the attack on the Hôtel de Ville was only a part of the scheme of operation; that an insurrection was organized throughout France; that the king was to be deposed, and a 'lieutenant of the kingdom' appointed, until the sovereign people had declared their will; and that the first movement was to be, a march of all the Parisian sections to Versailles. I should have started from my pillow, to spring, sabre in hand, upon the traitors; but I was held down by my wounds, and perhaps still more by the entreaties of my old attendant, who protested against my stirring, as it would be instantly 'followed by her murder and that of every inmate of the house.' The club now proceeded to enjoy themselves after the labours of the day. They had a republican carouse, and their revels were horrible. They soon became intoxicated, sang, danced, embraced, fought, and were reconciled again. Then

came the harangues; each orator exceeding his predecessor in blasphemy, till all was execration, cries of vengeance against kings and priests, and roars of massacre. I heard the names of men long suspected, but of whom they now spoke openly, as the leaders of the national movement; and of others marked for assassination. They drank toasts to 'Death,' to Queen Poissarde, and to 'Goddess Guillotine.' It was a pandemonium.

"A drum at length beat the 'Alarme' in the streets; the orgie was at an end, and amid a crash of bottles and glasses, they staggered, as well as their feet could carry them, out of the house. The heroes were received by the mob, in the Parisian style, with shouts of laughter. But the column moved forward; to the amount of thousands, as I could judge by their trampling, and the clashing of their arms. When the sound had died away in the distance, my humble friend entered my room, thanking his stars, that 'he had contrived to escape the march.'

"'Where are they gone?' I asked.

"'To Versailles,' was his shuddering answer.

"Nothing could now detain me. After some helpless efforts to rise from my bed, and an hour or two of almost despair, I succeeded in getting on my feet, and procuring a horse. Versailles was now my only object. I knew all the importance of arriving at the palace at the earliest moment; I knew the unprotected state of the king, and that it was my place to be near his person in all chances. I was on the point of sallying forth in my uniform, when the pre-

caution of my humble friend forced me back; telling me, truly enough, that, in the ferment of the public mind, it would be impossible for me to reach Versailles, as a *garde-du-corps*, and that my being killed or taken, would effectually prevent my bearing information of the state of the capital. This decided me; and, disguised as a courier, I set out by a cross-road, in hope to arrive before the multitude.

"But, I had not gone above a league, when I fell in with a scattered platoon of the mob, who were rambling along, as if on a party of pleasure; tossing their pikes and clashing their sabres to all kinds of revolutionary songs. I was instantly seized, as a 'courier of the Aristocrats.' Their sagacity, once at work, found out a hundred names for me:—I was an 'agent of the Austrians,' a 'disguised priest,' an 'emigrant noble;' my protestations were in vain, and they held a court-martial, on me and my horse, on the road; and ordered me to deliver up my despatches, on pain of being piked on the spot. But I could give up none; for the best of all possible reasons. I was now in real peril; for the party had continued to drink until they had nearly made themselves frantic; and as Versailles was still a dozen miles off, and they were unlikely to annihilate the garrison before nightfall, they prepared to render their share of service to their country, by annihilating me. In this dilemma, my good genius interposed, in the shape of an enormous *poissarde;* who, rushing through the crowd, which she smote with much the same effect as an elephant's trunk, threw her huge arms round me, called me her *cher Jacques,*

poured out a volley of professional eloquence on the shrinking heroes, and proclaimed me 'her son returning from the army!' All now was sentiment. The *poissarde* was probably in earnest, for her faculties were nearly in the same condition with those of her fellow patriots. I was honoured with a general embrace, and shared the privilege of the travelling bottle. As the night was now falling, an orator proposed, that 'the overthrow of the monarchy should be deferred until the next day.' A Fédéré uniform was provided for me; I was hailed as a brother; we pitched a tent, lighted fires, cooked a supper, and bivouacked for the night.

"In ten minutes the whole party were asleep. I rose, stole away, left my newly-found mother to lament her lost son again, and with a heavy heart took the road to Versailles. The night had changed to a sudden tempest, and the sky had grown dark as death. It was a night for the fall of a dynasty. But there was a lurid blaze in the distant horizon, and from time to time a shout, or a sound of musketry, which told me only too well where Versailles lay. I need not say what my feelings were, while traversing the solitary road; or what I imagined in every roar, as it came mingled with the bellowing of the thunder. I felt, that the attack must be commencing at the moment; the blaze that I saw might be the conflagration of the palace; the firing might be the battle over the bodies of the royal family. I never passed three hours in such anxiety of mind, and it was deepened by the utter loneliness of the road. I did not meet with a single human being; for the inhabit-

ants of the cottages had fled, or put out all their lights, and shut themselves up in their houses. The armed multitude had rushed on, leaving nothing but silence and terror behind.

"The church clocks were striking three in the morning, when I arrived at Versailles; after the most exhausting journey that I had ever made. But there, what a scene met my eye! It was beyond all that I had ever imagined of rabble ferocity, or rabble triumph. Though it was still night, the multitude thronged the streets; the windows were all lighted up, huge fires were blazing in all directions, torches were carried about at the head of every troop of the banditti; it was the bivouac of a hundred thousand bedlamites. It was now that I owned the lucky chance which had made me a Fédéré. In any other dress I should have been a suspicious person, and have probably been put to death; but, in the brown coat, sabre, and red cap of the Sectionnaire, I was fraternized with in all quarters. My first object was, to approach the palace, if possible. But there I found a *cordon* of the national guard drawn up, who had no faith even in my mob costume; and I was repelled. I could only see at a distance, drawn up in front of the palace, a strong line of troops—the regiment of Flanders and the Swiss battalion. All in the palace was darkness. It struck me as the most funereal sight that I had ever beheld.

"In my disappointment, I wandered through the town. The night was rainy, and gusts of wind tore every thing before them; yet the armed populace remained carousing in the streets—all was shout-

ing, oaths, and execrations against the royal family. Some groups were feasting on the plunder of the houses of entertainment, others were dancing and roaring the 'Carmagnole.' One party had broken into the theatre, and dressed themselves in the spoils of the wardrobe; others were drilling, and exhibiting their skill, by firing at the king's arms hung over the shops of the *restaurateurs*. Those shops were crowded with hundreds, eating and drinking at free cost. All the *cafés* and gaming-houses were lighted from top to bottom. The streets were a solid throng, and almost as bright as at noonday; and the jangling of all the Savoyard organs, horns, and voices, the riot and roar of the multitude, and the frequent and desperate quarrels of the different sections, who challenged each other to fight, during this lingering period, were absolutely distracting. Versailles looked alternately like a vast masquerade, like an encampment of savages, and like a city taken by storm.

"As, wearied to death, I threw myself down to rest on the steps of one of the churches, a procession of patriots happened to fix its quarters on the spot. Its leader, a grotesque-looking fellow, dressed in a priest's vestments—doubtless a part of the plunder of the night—and seated on a barrel on wheels, like a Silenus; from which, at their several halts, he harangued his followers, and drank to the 'downfall of the Bourbons;' soon let me into the history of the last twelve hours. 'Brave Frenchmen,' exclaimed the mummer, 'the eyes of the world are fixed upon you; and this night you have done, what the world has never rivalled—you have shaken the throne of

the tyrant. What cared you for the satellites of the Bourbon? You scorned their bayonets; you laughed at their bullets. Nothing can resist the energy of Frenchmen.' This flourish was, of course, received with a roar. The orator now produced a scarf, which he had wrapped round his waist, and waved it in the light before them. 'Look here, citizen soldiers,' he cried; 'brave Fédérés, see this gore. It is the blood of the monsters who would extinguish the liberty of France. Yesterday I headed a battalion of our heroes in the attack of the palace. A slave of the tyrant Capet rushed on me, sword in hand; I sent a bullet through his heart, and, as he fell, I tore this scarf from his body. See the marks of his blood.' It may be conceived, with what feelings I heard this narrative.—The palace had been sacked, the queen insulted, my friends and comrades murdered. I gave an involuntary groan; his fierce eye fell upon me as I endeavoured to make my escape from this horrible neighbourhood, and he ordered me to approach him. The fifty pikes which were brandished at his word, made obedience necessary. The crowd roared for my death. But, he whispered, 'I know you well; you are at my mercy; I have often played the barrel-organ outside the walls of your *corps-de-garde;* you are acquainted with the secret ways of the palace, and you must lead us in, or die upon the spot.' He probably took my astonishment and silence for acquiescence; for he thrust a musket into my hand. 'This night,' said he, aloud, 'will settle every thing. The whole race of the Bourbons are doomed. The fry may have escaped, but we have netted all the

great fish. We have friends, too, in high quarters;' and he shook a purse of louis-d'ors at my ear. 'We are to storm the palace an hour before daybreak; the troops must either join us, or be put to death; the king and his tribe will be sent to a dungeon; and France, before to-morrow night, will have at her head, if not the greatest man, the richest fool, in Europe.' He burst out into an irrestrainable laugh, in which the whole party joined. But the sound of cannon broke off his speech; all shouldered pike or musket; I was placed under the especial surveillance of a pair with drawn sabres, which had probably seen some savage service during the night, for they were clotted with blood; and with me for their guide, the horde of savages rushed forward, shouting, to join the grand attack on the defenders of our unfortunate king.

"My situation had grown more trying at every moment, but escape was still impossible, and my next thought was, to make the best of my misfortune, by entering the palace along with the crowd, and, when once there, dying by the side of my old comrades. I had, however, expected a sanguinary struggle. What was my astonishment, when I saw the massive gates, which might have been so easily defended, broken open at once—a few random shots the only resistance, and the staircases and ante-rooms in possession of the multitude, within a quarter of an hour! 'Where is La Fayette?' in wrath and indignation, I cried to one of the wounded *garde-du-corps*, whom I had snatched from among the knives of my *sans-culotte* companions. 'Asleep,' answered the dying

man, with a bitter smile. 'Where are the National Guard whom he brought with him last night from Paris?' I asked, in wonder. 'Asleep, too,' was the contemptuous answer. I rushed on, and at length reached my friends; tore off my Fédéré uniform, and used, with what strength was left me, my bayonet, until it was broken.

"I shall say no more of that night of horrors. The palace was completely stormed. The splendid rooms, the place of fighting hand to hand; the royal furniture, statues, and pictures, tossed and trampled in heaps; wounded and dead men lying every where; the constant discharge of muskets and pistols; the breaking open of doors with hatchets and sledge hammers; the shrieks of women flying for their lives, or hanging over their wounded sons and husbands; and the huzzas of the rabble, at every fresh entrance which they forced into the suites of apartments,—all formed a scene of confusion and horror, wholly indescribable. Some unaccountable chance saved the royal family—I fear, for deeper sufferings; for the next step was degradation.

"At morning, the rabble leaders insisted that the king should return with them to Paris. Monsieur La Fayette was now awake; and he gave it as his opinion, that this was the only mode of pleasing the populace. When a king submits to popular will, he is disgraced; and a disgraced king is undone. It was now broad day; the contest was over; the royal carriages were ordered; and the *garde-du-corps* were drawn up to follow them. At this moment, the barrel-organ man, my leader of the night, passed me by with a grimace,

and whispered, 'Brother Fédéré, did I not tell you how it would be? The play is only beginning; the farce came first, we have not finished yet; *bonjour*.' He laughed, and disappeared among the crowd.

"There was one misery to come, and that was the worst of all; the procession to Paris. It was like the march of American savages, with their scalps and prisoners. The crowd had been largely recruited by the national guards of the neighbouring villages, and by crowds flocking from Paris on the intelligence of the rabble victory. The escort of the *garde* was useless; we ourselves were prisoners. Round the carriage of the king, thousands of the refuse of Paris, men and women, railed and revelled, sang and shouted, the most furious insults on their majesties. And in front of this mass were carried on pikes, as standards, the heads of two of our corps, who had fallen fighting at the door of the queen's chamber. Loaves, borne on pikes, and dipped in blood, formed others of their standards. Huge placards, with the words, 'Down with the tyrant! Down with the priests! Down with the nobles!' waved above the heads of the multitude. 'Make way for the baker, his wife, and the little apprentice,' was shouted, with every addition of obloquy and insolence; and, in this agony, we were forced to drag on our weary steps till midnight. One abomination more was to signalize the horrible spirit of the time. Within a league of Paris, the royal equipages were ordered to halt; and for what purpose? It was, that the bleeding heads of our unfortunate comrades might be dressed and pow-

dered by the village barber—to render them fit to enter Paris. The heads were then brought to the carriage windows, for the approval of the royal prisoners; and the huge procession of folly and fury moved onward, with all its old bellowings again.

"We entered the city by torch-light, amid the firing of cannon; the streets were all illuminated, and the multitude poured on, maddened with brandy. Yet the scene was unlike that of the night before. There was something in the extravagances of Versailles, wholly different from the sullen and frowning aspect of Paris. The one had the look of a melodrame; the other the look of an execution. All here was funereal. We marched with the king to the Place du Carrousel, and when the gates of the palace closed on him, I felt as if they were the gates of the tomb. Perhaps it would be best that they were; that the king should never suffer such another day; that the man should never look on the face of man again. He had drained the cup of agony; he had tasted all the bitterness of death; human nature could not sustain such another day; and, loyal as I was, I wished that the descendant of so many kings should rather die by the hand of nature, than by the hand of villains; or should rather mingle his ashes with the last flame of the Tuileries, than glut the thirst of rebellion with his blood on the scaffold."

The story left us all melancholy, for a while; bright eyes again overflowed, as well they might; and stately bosoms heaved with irresistible emotion.

Yet, after all, the night was wound up with a general cotillon, danced with as much grace, and as much gaiety too, as if it had been in the Salle d'Opéra.

CHAPTER VI.

"Well! 'tis no matter; honour pricks me on; but, how if honour pricks me off when I come on? Can honour set me a leg? No! Or an arm? No! Or take away the grief of a wound? No; honour hath no skill in surgery. Then what is honour? A word! What is that word? Air—a trim reckoning!"—SHAKSPEARE.

I ROSE early next morning, and felt the spirit-stirring power of the sea-breeze. In those days, Brighton covered but the borders of the shore. It was scarcely more than a little line of fishermen's cottages, fenced against the surge by the remaining timbers of boats which had long seen their last adventure. Scattered at distances of at least a quarter of a mile from each other, lay some houses of a better description, a few deeply embosomed in trees, or rather in such thickets as could grow in the perpetual exposure to the rough winds and saline exhalations of the Channel. Of those, the one in which I had taken up my present residence was amongst the best; though its exterior was so unpresuming, that I was inclined to give Mordecai, or rather his gay heiress, credit for humility, or perhaps for the refinement, of striking their visiters

with the contrast between its simplicity of exterior and richness of decoration within.

It was a brisk, bright morning, and the waves were curling before a lively breeze, the sun was glowing, and clusters of vessels, floating down the Channel, spread their sails like masses of summer cloud in the sunshine. It was my first sight of the ocean, and that sight is always a new idea. Alexander, standing on the shores of the Persian Gulf, said, "That he then first felt, what the world was." Often as I have seen the ocean since, the same conception has always forced itself on me.

What power, what depth, what expanse, lay before my eyes! How singular, too, that while the grandeur of the land arises from bold irregularity and incessant change of aspect, from the endless variety of forest, vale, and mountain; the same effect should be produced in the ocean, by the absence of all irregularity and all change! A simple, level horizon, perfectly unbroken, a line of almost complete uniformity, compose a grandeur that impresses and fills the soul, as powerfully as the most cloud-piercing Alp, or the Andes clothed with thunder.

This was the ocean in calm; but how glorious, too, in tempest! The storm that sweeps the land, is simply a destroyer or a renovator; it smites the surface, and is gone. But the ocean is the seat of its power, the scene of its majesty, the element in which it sports, lives, and rules, penetrating to its depths, rolling its surface in thunder on the shore,

changing its whole motion, its aspect, its uses; and, grand as it is in its serenity, giving it another and a more awful grandeur in its convulsion. How strangely, too, yet how admirably, does it fulfil its great human object! Its depth and extent seem to render it the very element of separation; all the armies of the earth might be swallowed up between the shores of the Channel. Yet this is the element of connexion, actually combining the remotest regions of the earth. Divisions and barriers are essential to the protection of kingdoms from each other; but, what height of mountain range, or what depth of precipice, could be so secure as the defence so simply and perpetually supplied by a surrounding sea? Yet this noblest of all ramparts supplies the mightiest means of peaceful prosperity; invincible as a protection, it pours at the same time the wealth of the globe into the bosom of a nation.

Even all this is only the ocean as referred to man. How much more magnificent is it in itself! Thrice the magnitude of the land, the *world* of waters! its depth unfathomable, its mountains loftier than the loftiest of the land, its valleys more profound, the pinnacles of its hills islands! What immense varieties of animal and vegetable life may fill those boundless pastures and plains, on which man shall never look! What herds, by thousands and millions, of those colossal creatures, whose skeletons we discover, from time to time, in the wreck of the antediluvian globe! What secrets of form and power, of capacity and enjoyment, may

exist under the cover of that mighty expanse of waters which fills the bed of the ocean, and spreads round the globe!

While those and similar ramblings were passing through my mind, as I sat gazing on the bright and beautiful expanse before me; I was aroused by a step on the shingle. I turned, and saw the gallant guardsman, who had so much interested our party on the night before. But he received my salutation with a gravity, which instantly put an end to my good-humour; and I waited for the *dénouement*, at his pleasure. He produced from his pocket a sealed billet, which I opened, and which, on glancing my eye over it, appeared to me a complete rhapsody. I begged of him to read it, and indulge me with an explanation. He read it, and smiled.

"It is, I own, not perfectly intelligible," said he; "but, some allowance must be made for a man deeply injured, and inflamed by a sense of wrong."

I read the signature—Lafontaine, *Capitaine des Chasseurs légers*. I had never heard the name before. I begged to know "the nature of his business with me, as it was altogether beyond my conjecture."

"It is perfectly probable, sir," was the reply; "for I understand that you had never seen each other till last night, at the house of your friend. The case is simply this:—Lafontaine, who is one of the finest fellows breathing, has been for some time deeply smitten by the various charms of your host's very pretty daughter, and, so far as I comprehend, the lady has acknowledged his merits. But your

arrival here has a good deal deranged the matter. He conceives your attentions to his fair one to be of so marked a nature, that it is impossible for him to overlook them."

I laughed, and answered,

"Sir, you may make your friend quite at his ease on the subject, for I have not known the lady's existence till within these twenty-four hours."

"You danced with her half the evening—you sat beside her at supper. She listened to you with evident attention — of this I myself was witness; and the report in the neighbourhood is, that you have come to this place by an express arrangement with her father," gravely retorted the guardsman.

All this exactness of requisition appeared to me to be going much too far; and I exhibited my feeling on the subject, in the tone in which I replied, that I had stated everything that was necessary for the satisfaction of a "man of sense; but that I had neither the faculty nor the inclination to indulge the captiousness of any man."

His colour mounted, and I seemed as if I was likely to have a couple of heroes on my hands. But he compressed his lip, evidently strangled a chivalric speech, and, after a pause to recover his calmness, said—

"I have not come here to decide punctilios on either side. I heartily wish that this affair had not occurred, or could be reconciled; my countrymen here, I know, stand on a delicate footing, and I am perfectly aware of the character that will be fastened on them by the occurrence of such rencontres. Can

you suggest any means by which this difference may be settled at once?"

"None in the world, sir," was my answer. "I have told you the fact, that I have no pretension whatever to the lady—that I am wholly unacquainted even with the person of your friend—that the idea of intentional injury on my part, therefore, is ridiculous; and let me add, for the benefit of your friend, that to expect an apology for imaginary injuries, would be the most ridiculous part of the entire transaction."

"What, then, am I to do?" asked the gallant captain, evidently perplexed. "I really wish that the affair could be got over without *fracas*. In fact, though the Jewess is pretty, Lafontaine's choice does not much gratify any of us."

"What you ought to do, sir, is sufficiently plain," said I. "Go to your friend; if he has brains enough remaining, to comprehend the nature of the case, he will send you back with his apology. If he has not, I shall remain for half an hour on the sands until he has made up his mind."

The captain made me a low bow, and slowly paced back to the lodging of his fiery compatriot.

When I was left alone, I, for the first time, felt the whole ill-luck of my situation. So long as I was heated by our little dialogue, I thought only of retorting the impertinent interference of a stranger with my motives or actions. But, now, the whole truth flashed on me with the force of a new faculty. I saw myself involved in a contest with a fool or a lunatic, in which either of our lives, or both, might be sacrificed—and for nothing. Hope, fortune, reputation,

perhaps renown, all the prospects of life were opening before me, and I was about to shut the gate with my own hand. In those thoughts I was still too young, for what is called personal peril to intervene. The graver precaution of more advanced years was entirely out of the question. I was a soldier, or about to be one; and I should have rejoiced, if the opportunity had been given to me, in heading a forlorn hope, or doing any other of those showy things which make a name. But, the war was beginning—my future regiment was ordered for foreign service—every heart in England was beating with hope or fear—every eye of Europe was fixed upon England and Englishmen; and, in the midst of all this national excitement, to fall in a pitiful private quarrel, struck me with a sudden sense of self-contempt and wilful absurdity, that made me almost loathe my being. I acknowledge that the higher thoughts, which place those rencontres in their most criminal point of view, had then but little influence with me. But, to think that, within the next hour, or the next five minutes, I might be but like the sleepers in the rude resting-place of the fishermen; with my name unknown, and all the associations of life extinguished—

> "This sensible warm motion to become
> A kneaded clod"—

was an absolute pang. I could have died a martyr; and despised the flame, or rather rejoiced in it, as a security that I should not perish forgotten. But a fancied wrong, an obscure dispute, the whole future of an existence flung away for the jealous dreams of a half frantic Frenchman, or the sport of a coquette, of whom

I knew as little as of her fantastic lover, threw me into a fever of scorn for the solemn follies of mankind.

The captain returned. I had not stirred from the spot.

"I regret," said he, "that my friend is wholly intractable. He has convinced himself, if he can convince no one else, that he has lost the good opinion of his fair one, and that you are the cause. Some communications which he had from London, informed him of your frequent intercourse with her father. This rendered him suspicious, and the peculiar attention with which you were treated last night, produced a demand on the lady for an explanation; which, of course, heightened the quarrel. The inamorata, probably not displeased to have more suitors than one; whether in amusement or triumph, appears to have assisted his error, if such it be; and he returned home, stung to madness by what he terms her infidelity. He now requires your formal abandonment of the pursuit."

All my former feelings of offence recurred at the words, and I hotly asked—"Well, sir, to whom must I kneel—to the lady or the gentleman? Take my answer back—that I shall do neither. Where is your friend to be found?"

He pointed to a clump of trees within a few hundred yards, and I followed him. I there saw my antagonist; a tall and handsome young man, but with a countenance of such dejection that he might have sat for the picture of despair. It was clear that his case was one for which there was no tonic, but what the wits of the day called "a course of steel." Beside him

stood a grey-haired old figure, of a remarkably intelligent countenance, though stooped slightly with age. He was introduced to me as General Deschamps; and in a few well-expressed words, he mentioned that he attended, from respect to the British; to offer his services to me, on an occasion "which he deeply regretted, but which circumstances unfortunately rendered necessary; and which all parties were, doubtless, anxious to conclude, before it should produce any irritation in the neighbourhood."

To the offer of choice of weapons, I returned an answer of perfect indifference. It had happened, that as my father had destined me for diplomacy, and had conceived the science to have but two essentials, French and fencing, I was tolerably expert in both. Swords were chosen. We were placed on the ground, and the conflict began. My antagonist was evidently a master of his art; but there is no weapon whose use depends so much upon the mind at the moment, as the sword. He was evidently resolved to kill or be killed; and the desperation with which he rushed on me exposed him to my very inferior skill. At the third pass I ran him through the sword arm. He staggered back with the twinge; but, at the instant when he was about to bound on me, and perhaps take his revenge, a scream stopped us all; a female, wrapped in cloak and veil, rushed forward, and threw herself into Lafontaine's arms, in a passion of tears. An attendant, who soon came up, explained the circumstance; and it finally turned out that the fair Mariamne, whatever her coquetry might have intended at night, repented at morn; recollected

some of the ominous expressions of her lover; and, on hearing that he had been seen with a group entering the grove, and that I, too, was absent; had conjectured the truth at once, and flown, with her *femme de chambre,* to the rendezvous. She had come, just in time.

The reconciliation was complete. I was now not only forgiven by the lover, but was the "very best friend he had in the world;—a man of honour, a paragon, a *chevalier sans peur et sans reproche.*" The wound of the gallant chasseur was bound up, like an ancient knight's, with his mistress's scarf. She upbraided me, with her glistening eyes, for having had the audacity to quarrel with her hero; and then, with the same eyes, thanked me for the opportunity of proving her faith to *cher et malheureux Charles.* Her little heart poured out its full abundance in her voluble tongue; and for a quarter of an hour, and it is a long life for happiness, we were the happiest half dozen in Christendom.

How Mordecai would admire all this, was yet to be told; but my casual mention of his name broke up the rapture at once. Mariamne suddenly became sensible of the irregularity of alternately fainting and smiling in the arms of a handsome young soldier; and in the presence, too, of so many spectators, all admirers of her black eyes and blooming sensibilities. She certainly looked to me much prettier than in her full dress charms of the evening before, and I almost began to think that the prize was worth contending for; but the guardsman and the old general had felt the effects of the morning air, and were unsentimen-

tally hungry. Mariamne and her attendant were escorted to the edge of the plantation by her restored knight; and I accepted the general's invitation to breakfast, instead of drowning myself in the next pond.

The general was lodged in the first floor of a fisherman's dwelling, which, in more polished parts of the land, would have been pronounced a hovel, but in Brighton, as it then was, bore the name of a house. We entered it through an apartment filled with matters of the fisherman's trade,—nets, barrels, and grapnels; and in a corner a musket or two, which had evidently seen service, though probably *not* in his Majesty's pay. The walls were covered with engravings of British sea-fights and favourite admirals, from the days of Elizabeth; patriotic in the highest degree, and most intolerable specimens of the arts; the floor, too, had its covering, but it was of nearly a dozen children of all sizes, from the bluff companion of his father down to the crier in the cradle; yet all fine bold specimens of the brood of sea and fresh air, British bull-dogs, that were yet to pin down the game all round the world.

The general welcomed us to his little domicile, with as much grace as if he had been ushering us into the throne-room of the Tuileries. I afterwards understood that he had been governor of the "Invalides;" and the change from the stately halls of that military palace must have severely taxed the philosophy of any man; yet there was no appearance of having even ruffled the temperament of the gallant veteran. He smiled, talked, and did the honours of

his apartment with as much urbanity, as if he had been surrounded by all the glittering furniture, and all the liveried attendance, of his governorship. I have always delighted in an old Frenchman, especially if he has served. It is after its coxcombry is rubbed off by the changes and chances of the world, that the really valuable material of the national character is to be seen. It always reminds me of the mother-of-pearl shell, rude and repulsive on the surface, but by friction exhibiting a fine interior. If the whole of "la jeune France" sprang on their feet and clapped their hands to the hilts of their swords, or more probably to their daggers, to avenge the desecration of the only shrine at which nine-tenths of them worship; I should still pronounce the Frenchman the most repellent of Europeans. What is his look of conscious superiority to all that exist besides, in this round world—the toss of his nostril, the glare of his eye, the contempt of his gathered lip, but a signal for general battle? Give me the homeliest manners of the homeliest corner of Europe—nay, give me the honest rudeness of the American savage, in preference to this intolerable assumption of an empty superiority.

Nearly twenty years after this period, I happened to be sitting one day with Gentz, the great practical philosopher of his age and country. Germany was then in the most deplorable depression, overrun with French armies; and Napoleon was at Erfurth, in the pride of that "bad eminence" on which he stood in such Titanic grandeur, and from which he was so soon

to be flung with such Titanic ruin. Our conversation naturally turned on the melancholy state of things.

"I think," said the great politician, "that this evil supremacy *must* fall. I might not think so, if any other nation were the masters of Europe; but France, though often a conqueror, has never been a possessor. The character of her people has been the perpetual obstacle to the solidity of her empire."

To my remark, that her central position, her vast population, the bravery of her troops, and the military propensities of her people, fitted France to be the disturber of Europe,

"Yes," was the sage's answer; "but, to be no more than the disturber. Her power is the whirlwind. For purposes which man may never be able fully to define; she is suffered, or sent forth, to sweep the Continent; perhaps, like the tempest, to punish, nay, perhaps in the end to purify; but the tempest is scarcely more transitory, or more different from the dew, that invisibly descends and silently refreshes the land."

"But, Napoleon," said I, "with an army of half a million, recruited from thirty millions, and with nothing to oppose him, but the worn-down force and exhausted treasures of the Continent! What an iron wedge, driven in among their dilapidated combinations! What a shell, flung into an infirmary! What a mountain of granite, with the cloud and the thunder for its crown, domineering over the plain!"

"True—perfectly true," he replied, throwing back the long locks from a broad forehead, which re-

minded me of a bust of Plato. "True. Man may be as little able to decide on the means by which the power of France will fall, as on the purposes for which that tremendous fabric of splendid iniquity rose. But, look into that street."

It happened that a French regiment of cuirassiers, with the fine clangour of its drums and trumpets, was passing under the window at the moment.

"You see there," said he, "the kind of feeling which that really striking show produces;—not a window is open but our own. The blinds of every balcony have been let down; not an eye looks at these troops. Yet the public of Vienna are extravagantly fond of display in all its shapes; and punchinello, or a dance of dogs, would bring a visage to every pane, from the roof to the ground."

"They are shrunk from, naturally enough, as conquerors," I observed; chiefly from a desire to hear more of the sentiments of the celebrated German.

"No—no!" said he, almost in a tone of vexation. "The Germans are as much alive to the merits of their enemies in the field, as any other nation in the world. They acknowledge the soldiership of the French. I even believe, that the talents of their extraordinary emperor are more sincerely acknowledged in Vienna than in Paris. But, it is the contemptuous spirit of the national character, that makes its bravery, its gaiety, and even its genius, detested. Trust me; this feeling will not be unfruitful. Out of the hut of the peasant will come the avengers, whom the cabinet has never been able to find in the

camp. Out of the morass and the thicket will rise the tree, that will at once overshadow the fallen fortunes of Germany, and bring down the lightning on her aggressors. In this hope alone I live."

I once more asked him, "From what quarter was the restoration to come?"

"I know not—I care not—I ask not," said he, starting from his chair, and traversing the room with huge strides. "The topic tortures me, as if a sword was now forcing its way through my frame. But, France will never keep Austria, nor Prussia, nor the Rhenish provinces, nor Holland, nor any spot on earth, beyond the soil inhabited by Frenchmen."

"Are the German sovereigns of your opinion?"

"To a man. It is but this morning, that I was honoured with a reception by our good emperor. His conviction was complete. Yet, you will not see Austria stir a single step, until war is the outcry, —not of her court, but of her people. The trumpet that leads the march will be blown not from the parade of Vienna or of Berlin, but from the village, and the pasture, and the forest, and the mountain. The army will be the peasant, the weaver, the trader, the student, the whole of the pacific multitude of life, turned into the materials of war;—the ten thousand rills that silently water the field of society, suddenly united into one inundation;—the eyes of every man looking only for the enemy; the feet of every man pursuing him; the hands of every man slaying him. The Frenchman has contrived to convey a sense of the whole bitterness of conquest into every heart of our

millions, and our millions will return it with resistless retribution."

"You have cheered, and convinced me," said I, as I rose to take my leave. "It certainly has often struck me as singular, that France, always mad with the love of possession, has been able to acquire nothing during the last hundred years."

"You will find my theory true," said Gentz. "The individual insolence of her people has been the real impediment to the increase of her dominions. France is not the only ambitious power on the face of the earth. Russia has doubled her empire within these hundred years; yet she has kept possession of every league. Prussia has doubled her territory within half the time, yet she has added the new solidly to the old. I am not an advocate for the principle or the means by which those conquests have been accomplished; but they have been retained. Austria has been for the same time mistress of Italy, and though the French arms may have shaken her authority, it was never shaken by popular revolt. And why is all this contradistinction to the flighty conquests and ephemeral domination of France? The obvious reason is, that however the governments might be disliked, neither the Austrian soldier, nor the Prussian, nor the Russian, employed his study, in vexing the feelings of the people, had a perpetual sneer on his visage, or exhibited in his habits a perpetual affectation of that coxcomb superiority to all other human beings, that sneering supremacy, that grotesque

and yet irritating caricature, which makes the *Moi, je suis Français,* at once, a demand for universal adoration, and a challenge to universal hostility."

"But, when will this great consummation arrive?"

"When the tyranny can be endured no longer; when the people see, that they must depend upon themselves for its redress; when a just Providence finds the vindication of its laws required by the necessities of man."

"From what quarter will the grand effort first come?"

"From the nation most aggrieved."

"What, then, will be its result?"

To this hour, I remember the sudden light which flashed into his cold grey eye, the gasping lip, and the elevation which even his stooped form assumed; as he answered, with a tone and gesture, which might have been imagined for one of the prophets of the Sistine Chapel—

"The result will be, the fall of the French empire, for it is a house built on the sand;—the extinction of Napoleon, for that empire is his creation, and the one cannot survive the other;—the liberation of Europe, for its united strength can be chained no longer;—perhaps the liberty of man; for, the next step of nations which have crushed foreign dominion, is to extinguish domestic despotism. But, Europe once free, what is to come?—A new era, a new shape of society, a new discovery of the mighty faculties of nations, of the wonders of mind, of matter, and of man; a vast shaking of the earth and its institutions—and

out of this chaos, a new moral creation, *fiat lux, et fugient tenebræ.*"

The prediction has been partly realized. Much is yet to be fulfilled. But, like Gentz, I live in hope, and think that I see an approach to the consummation.

CHAPTER VII.

"Then let me go, and hinder not my course.
I'll be as patient as a gentle stream,
And make a pastime of each weary step,
Till the last step hath brought me to my love.
And there I'll rest, as, after much turmoil,
A blessed soul doth in Elysium."

SHAKSPEARE.

THE party to whom I was now introduced, were of a different order from the generality of their country. Originally, of the first education and first society in France, the strictness of the military service had produced on them the most valuable effect of years. The natural vividness of their temperament was smoothed down, their experience of English kindness had diminished their prejudices; and adversity —and no men bear the frowns of fortune better than their nation—gave them almost the manly calmness of the English gentleman. I found the old general all courtesy, and his friends all good-humour. My conduct in the affair of the morning was after their own hearts; I had, by common consent, earned their good graces; and they gave me on the spot half a

dozen invitations to the regiments and chateaus of themselves and their friends, with as much hospitable sincerity, as if they had only to recross the Channel to take possession of them again. Lafontaine was still moody, but he was in love; and, by this fact, unlike every body else, and unlike himself, from one half hour to another.

The conversation soon turned on a topic, on which the emigrants every where were peculiarly anxious to be set right with English feeling, namely, their acquittance from the charge of having fled unnecessarily.

"Men of honour," observed the general, "understand each other, in all countries. I therefore always think it due, to both Englishmen and Frenchmen, to explain, that we are not here in the light of fugitives; that we have not given up the cause of our country; and that we are on English ground in express obedience to the commands of our sovereign. I am at this moment, in this spot, on the king's duty, waiting, like my gallant friends here, merely the order to join the first expedition which can be formed for the release of our monarch, and the rescue of France from the horde of villains who have filled it with rebellion." All fully accorded with the sentiment. "The captivity of the king," said he, "is the result of errors, which none could have anticipated ten days since. The plan decided on by the council of officers, of which I was one, was the formation of a camp on the frontier, to which his majesty and the princes should repair, summon the chief authorities of the kingdom, and there provide for the general safety,

with a deliberation which was impossible in Paris. It was impeded; it was rejected. And it was resumed, only when it was too late. In revolutions, the man who is first, wins the day.

"At length, I was sent off at midnight to take the command of the District of the Loire. I found myself there at the head of ten regiments, in the highest order, and, as I thought, of the highest loyalty. I addressed them, and was received with shouts of *Vive le Roi!* I gave an addition of pay to the troops, and a banquet to the officers. A note was handed to me, as I took my seat at the head of the table. It simply contained the words, 'You are betrayed.' I read it aloud in contempt, and was again answered by shouts of *Vive le Roi!* But, while we were in the midst of our conviviality, a volley was fired in at the windows, and the streets of Nantz were in uproar—the whole garrison had mutinied! The officers were still loyal: but what was to be done? We rushed out with drawn swords. On our first appearance in the porch of the hotel, a platoon posted in front, evidently for our massacre, levelled by word of command, and fired deliberately into the midst of us. Several were killed on the spot, and many wounded. Some rushed forward, and some retreated into the house. I was among those who forced their way through the crowd, and before I had struggled to the end of the long street, the cry of 'fire' made me look round—the hotel was in a blaze. The rabble had set it on flame. It was this, probably, that saved me, by distracting their attention. I made my way to the chateau of the Count de Travancour,

whose son had been on my staff at the Invalides. But, the family were in Paris, and its only inhabitants were servants. I had received a musket-ball in my arm, and was faint with loss of blood. Still, I was determined not to quit my district, as long as any thing could be done. But I had scarcely thrown myself, in weariness and vexation, on a sofa; when a servant rushed into the room with the intelligence, that a band of men with torches were approaching the chateau. To defend it with a garrison of screaming women was hopeless; and while I stood considering what to do next, we heard the crash of the gates. The whole circle instantly fell on their knees before me, and implored, that I should save their lives and my own, by making my escape. A courageous Breton girl undertook to be my guide to the stables, and we set off, under a shower of prayers for our safety. But, as we wound our way along the last corridor, I saw the crowd of soldiers and populace rushing up the staircase at the opposite side of the court, and calling out my name, joined to a hundred atrocious epithets. My situation now obviously became difficult; for our advance would be met at the next minute by the assassins. The girl's presence of mind alone saved me; she flew back to the end of the gallery, threw open a small door which led to the roof; and I was suddenly in the open air, with the stars bright above me, and a prodigious extent of the country, including Nantz, with all its illumination and uproar, beneath.

"You may believe, that the landscape was not among my principal contemplations at the moment;

my eyes involuntarily turned on the town; where, from the blazes springing up in various quarters, I concluded that a general pillage had begun. That pillage was the order of the day much nearer to me, I could fully conceive, from the opening and shutting of doors, and the general tumult immediately under the leads where I stood. Situation, gentlemen," said the old general, smiling, "is something, but circumstances are necessary to make it valuable. There never was a finer night for an investigation of the stars, if I had been an astronomer; and I dare say, that the spot which formed my position would have been a capital one for an observatory; but the torches which danced up and down through the old and very dingy casements of the mansion, were a matter of much more curious remark to me, than if I had discovered a new constellation.

"At length I was chased even out of this spot—my door had been found out. I have too much gallantry left, to suppose that my Breton had betrayed me; though a dagger at her heart and a purse in her hand might be powerful arguments against saving the life of a soldier, who had reached his grand climacteric. At all events, as I saw torch after torch rising along the roofs, I moved step by step into the darkness.

"But, I had here a new adventure. I saw a feeble light gleaming through the roof. An incautious step brought me upon a skylight, and I went through; my fall, however, being deadened by bursting my way through the canopy of a bed. I had fallen into the hospital of the chateau. An old Beguine was

reading her breviary in an adjoining room. She rushed in, with a scream. But those women are so much accustomed to casualties, that I had no sooner acquainted her with the reasons of my flight, than she offered to assist my escape. She had been for some days in attendance on a sick servant. She led me down to the entrance of a subterranean communication betwcen the mansion and the river, one of the old works which had probably been of serious service, in the days when every chateau in the West was a fortress. The boat which had brought her from the convent was at the mouth of the subterranean; there, the Loire was open. If you ask, why I did not prefer throwing myself before the pursuers, and dying like a soldier; my reason was, that I should have been numbered merely among those who had fallen obscurely in the various skirmishes of the country; and besides, that if I escaped, I should have one chance more of preserving the province.

"But, at the moment when I thought myself most secure, I was in reality in the greatest peril. The Loire had long since broken into the work, which had probably never seen a mason, since the wars of the League. I had made no calculation for this, and I had descended but a few steps, when I found my feet in water. I went on, however, till it reached my sword-belt. I then thought it time to pause; but just then I heard a shout at the top of the passage—on the other hand I felt that the tide was running in, and to stay where I was, would soon be impossible. The perplexity of that quarter of an hour will satisfy me for my whole life. I pretend to no philosophy,

and have never desired to die before my time. But it was absolutely not so much the dread of finishing my career, as of the manner in which it must be finished there; which made the desperate question. Still, even with the roar of the water on one side, and of the rabble on the other, I had a presentiment, that I should yet live to hang some of my pursuers. At all events, I determined not to give my body to be torn to pieces by savages, and my name to be branded as a runaway and a poltroon."

A strong suffusion overspread the veteran's face as he pronounced the words; he was evidently overcome by the possibility of the stigma.

"I have never spoken of that night before," said he, "and I allude to it even now, merely to tell this English gentleman and his friends, how groundless would be the idea that the soldiers and nobles of an unfortunate country made their escape, before they had both suffered and done a good deal. My condition was probably not more trying than that of thousands less accustomed to meet difficulties than the officers of France; and I can assure him, that no country is more capable of a bold endurance of evil, or of a chivalric attachment to a cause."

I gave my full acknowledgment, to a proposition in which I had already full faith, and of which the brave and intelligent old man before me was so stately an example.

"But I must not detain you," said he, "any longer with an adventure, which had not the common merit of a Boulevard spectacle; for it ended in neither the blowing up of a castle, nor, as you may

perceive, in the fall of the principal performer. As the tide rushed up through the works, I naturally receded; until at length I was caught sight of by the rabble. They poured down, and were now within a hundred yards of me, while I could not move. At that moment a strong light flashed along the cavern from the river, and I discovered, for the first time, that it too was not above a hundred yards from me. I had been a good swimmer in early life: I rushed on, soon reached the stream, and found that the light came from one of the boats which fish the Loire at night, and which had accidentally moored in front of my den. I got on board; the fisherman carried me to the other side; I made my way across the country, reached one of my garrisons, found the troops, fortunately, indignant at the treatment which the king's colours had received; marched at the head of two thousand men by daybreak, and by noon was in the Grande Place of Nantz; proceeding to try a dozen of the ringleaders who had not been merely rebels, but robbers and murderers; and amid the acclamations of the honest citizens, giving them over to the fate which villains in every country deserve, and which is the only remedy for rebellion in any. But my example was not followed; its style did not please the ministers whom our king had been compelled to choose by the voice of the Palais Royal; and as his Majesty would not consent to bring me to the scaffold, for doing my duty, he compromised the matter, by an order to travel for a year, and a passport for England."

"Toutes les belles dames sont, plus ou moins, coquettes," says that gayest of all old gentlemen, the

Prince de Ligne, who loved every body, amused every body, and laughed at every body. It is not for me to dispute the authority of one who contrived to charm, at once, the imperial austerity of Maria Theresa and the imperial pride of Catharine; to baffle the keen investigation of the keenest of mankind, the eccentric Kaunitz; and to rival the profusion of the most magnifique and oriental of all prime ministers, Potemkin.

Mariamne was a "*belle dame,*" and a remarkably pretty one. She was therefore entitled to all the privileges of prettiness; and, it must be confessed that she enjoyed them to a very animated extent. In the curious memoirs of French private life, from St. Simon and Sevigné down to St. Evremond and Marmontel—and certainly more amusing and dexterous dissections of human nature, at least as it is in France, never existed—our cooler countrymen often wonder at the strange attachments, subsisting for half a century between the old, who were nothing but simple fireside friends after all; and even between the old and the young. The story of Ninon and her Abbé—the unfortunate relationship, and the unfortunate catastrophe excepted—was the story of hundreds, or of thousands, in every city of France fifty years ago. Whatever might be the origin of the national habit, it seemed that every Frenchwoman enjoyed this sporting with the heart, more than its possession; the sense of having a dependent, more than of having a worshipper; the indulgence of a suspicious caprice, in preference to the generous impulse of those affections, which, for better or for

worse, make man and woman take their fate together, through the world.

Mariamne's foreign birth had given her foreign manners; and as she had been rendered by her late adventure all but the affianced bride of Lafontaine, she immediately assumed all the rights of a bride; treated him as her slave, received his friends at her villa with French favouritism, and opened her heart to them all, from the old general downwards, even to me. I had never seen a creature so joyous, with all her soul so speaking on her lips, and all her happiness so sparkling in her eyes. She was the most restless, too, of human beings; but it was the restlessness of a glow of enjoyment, of a bird in the first sunshine, of a butterfly in the first glitter of its wings. She was now continually forming some party, some ingenious surprise of pleasure, some little sportive excursion, some half theatric scene, to keep all our hearts and eyes as much alive as her own. Lafontaine obviously did not like this; and some keen encounters of their wits took place, on the pleasure which, as he averred, "she took in all society, but his own."

"If the charge be true," said she one day, "why am I in fault? It is so natural, to try to be happy.

"But, to be happy without me, Mariamne."

"Ah, what an impossibility!" laughed the little foreigner.

"But, to receive the attentions even of the general, old enough to have married your grandmother."

"Well, does it not show his taste, even in your

own opinion, to follow your example, and admire what you tell me, *you* adore?"

"You are changed, you are a *girouette*, Mariamne."

"Well, nothing in the world is so melancholy, as to let all the world pass by, without a thought, a feeling, or a wish. One might as well be one of the pictures in the Louvre, pretty and charming, and gazed at by all the passers-by, without a glance for any of them in return. I have no kind of envy for the honours of a mummy, covered with cloth of gold, and standing in a niche of cedar, yet with all its sensations vanished some thousand years ago."

"Was this the language you held to me when we first met, Mariamne?"

"Was this the language *you* held to me, when we first met, Charles? But, I shall lose my spirits, if I talk to you. What a sweet evening! What a delicious breeze! *Bon soir!*" And forth she went, tripping it among the beds of flowers like a sylph; followed by Lafontaine, moody and miserable, yet unable to resist the spell. Of those scenes I saw a hundred, regularly ending in the same conclusion; the lady always, as ladies ought, gaining the day, and the gentleman vexed, and vanquished. But evil days were at hand; trials more severe than the pretty arguments of lovers awaited them; and Lafontaine was to prove himself a hero in more senses than one, before they met again.

It happened, that I was somewhat a favourite with Mariamne. Yet, I was the only one, of whom Lafontaine never exhibited a suspicion. His nature

was chivalrous, the rencounter between us he regarded as in the strongest degree a pledge of brotherhood; and he allowed me to bask in the full sunshine of his fair one's smiles, without an idea of my intercepting one of their beams. In fact, he almost formally gave his wild bird into my charge. Accordingly, whenever he was called to London, which was not unfrequently the case; as the business of the emigrants with Government grew more serious; I was her chosen companion; and as she delighted in galloping over the hills and vales of Sussex, I was honoured by being her chief equerry; she repaying the service by acting as my cicerone.

"Come," said she one day, at the end of an excursion, or rather a race of some miles along the shore, which put our blood-horses in a foam, "have you ever seen Les Intérieurs?"

"No."

"I saw you," she remarked, "admiring the Duchesse de Saint Alainville, at our little ball the other night."

"It was impossible to refuse admiration. She is the noblest looking woman I ever saw."

"*One* of the noblest, sir, if you please. But, as I disdain the superb in every thing"——She fixed her bright eyes on me. I recovered my error.

"I admit, that the fascinating is much superior." A slight blush touched her cheek, she bowed, and all was good-humour again.

"Well, then," said she, "since you *have* shown yourself rational at last, I shall present you to this

stately paragon in her own palace. You shall see your idol in her morning costume, her French reality."

She touched the door of a cottage with her whip, and a bowing domestic appeared. "Is her Grace visible?" was the question. "Her Grace receives French society to-day," was the answer. My companion looked doubtful, but there was no retreating. We alighted from our horses, to attend the "reception."

The cottage was simply a cottage, roofed with thatch; and furnished in the homeliest style of the peasants to whom it had belonged. We went up stairs. A few objects of higher taste were to be seen, in the apartment to which we were now ushered—a pendule, a piano, and one or two portraits richly framed, and with ducal coronets above them. But, to my great embarrassment, the room was full, and full of the first names of France. Yet the whole assemblage were female, and the glance which the Duchess cast from her *fauteuil*, as I followed my rather startled guide into the room; showed me that I had committed some terrible solecism, in intruding on the party. On what mysteries had I ventured, and what was to be the punishment of my temerity in the very shrine of the Bona Dea? My pretty guide, on finding herself with all those dark eyes fixed on her, and all those stately features looking, something between sorrow and surprise, faltered, and grew alternately red and pale. We were both on the point of retiring; when the Duchess, after a brief consultation with some of the surrounding matronage, made a sign to Mari-

amne to approach. Her hospitality to the emigrant families had evidently given her a claim on their attentions. The result was a most gracious smile from Madame la Présidente, and I took my seat, in silence and submission.

"Is France a country of female beauty?" is a question which I have often heard, and which I have always answered by a recollection of that scene. I never saw so many handsome women together, before or since. All were not Venuses, it is true; but there was an expression, almost a mould of feature, universal, which struck the eye more than beauty. It was impossible to doubt, that I was among a high *caste;* there was a general look of nobleness, a lofty yet feminine grace of countenance, a stately sweetness, which one involuntarily connected with high birth, high manners, and high history.

There were some, whose fine regularity of feature might have served as the model for a Greek sculptor. Yet those were not the faces, on which the eye rested with the long and deep delight that "drinks in beauty." Captivation is content with less than the sublime; and—I saw some worthy of the living spell of Vandyke, more with the rich and *riant* beauty, which Reynolds loved, and still more with the subdued dignity and touching elegance of which Lawrence was so exquisite a master.

On my return to French society, in after years; I was absolutely astonished at the change which seemed to have taken place in the features of high life. I shall not hazard my reputation for gallantry,

by tracing the contrast more closely. But evil times had singularly acted upon the physiognomy, even of the nobles. The age of the *roturier* had been the climacteric of France. Generals from the ranks, countesses from the canaille, legislators from the dregs of the populace, and proprietors from the mingled stock of the parasite and the plunderer, naturally gave the countenance, formed by their habits, to the nation formed by their example.

Still, there are examples of this original beauty to be found among the *élite* of the noble families; but they are rare, and to be looked on, as one looks on a statue of Praxiteles found in the darkness and wrecks of Herculaneum. In the words of the old song, slightly changed—

> "I roam'd through France's sanguine sand,
> At beauty's altar to adore,
> But there the sword had spoil'd the land,
> And beauty's daughters were no more."

The assemblage was a singular, and a melancholy one. The news from France had become hourly more fearful. Paris was already in the power of the populace. The struggle continued, however hopelessly, in the provinces, only enough to swell the losses of noble life, and the conflagrations of noble property. To those wounds of feeling had now to be added sufferings of a still more pressing nature; their remittances had begun to fail. The property which they had left in the hands of their Parisian bankers had either become valueless by the issue of assignats, which no one would take, or confiscated in the general plunder of the banks, whose principals had been thrown into

prison, on *suspicion* of being worth robbing. All was bankruptcy.

The duchess made a slight attempt, evidently a painful one, to explain to us, as strangers, the purpose of their unusual meeting. It was simply, that "the emigrant noblesse, who had already experienced so much hospitality from their English friends, thought that the time was come, when they ought to be burdens on them no longer. The letters from France are dreadful," said she; "and it will be our duty to show, that as we have enjoyed prosperity, we can submit to suffering. We must now prepare to earn our bread, by those accomplishments which we acquired in happier times, and, as we once supposed, for happier times."

A general sigh seemed to break from every heart, and Mariamne hung on the hand of the duchess, and grew pale. There was silence for a while; at length she resumed—"We must not return to our own country, at least until this horrid struggle is at an end; for we should only embarrass those who have sent us to the protection of this generous land, and for whose sake we live. Yet, we only do honour to them, by avoiding to eat the bread of dependence, while we can labour for ourselves." Those words, few as they were, were uttered with many a pause, and in the low tone of a true mourner. The speaker then called a beautiful girl towards her. The girl rose, hesitated, and sank again. "Clotilde, my love," said she, "here are none but friends; we must forget every thing, but patience and our country." As she, at

length, approached the duchess, with her noble and expressive countenance suffused with crimson, and her fine eye involuntarily raised to heaven, I thought that I had never seen beauty before. Her contribution was a drawing of some size, and of singular elegance—an Arcadian festival. It was sent round the room, with universal admiration; and the ice thus once broken, a succession of proficients followed, bringing the produce of their talents; some, miniatures—some, sketches of French and Swiss scenery—some, illustrations of Racine and the French theatre; and many with embroidery, and the graceful works of the needle. Strangers were too apt to conceive that Paris was France, and that the frivolity of life in the capital was always its model in the provinces. I here had evidence to the contrary, and was not a little surprised to see performances so seldom to be found among the French arts, as admirable oil paintings, carvings in ivory, marble busts and bas reliefs, casts of antique vases and groups, and even models of the chief temples and palaces of antiquity. The leisure of the chateau was often vividly, and even vigorously employed; and while the youths of the great families were solely directed to military prospects, the females often acquired solid and grave accomplishments. In short, we had among us as many artificers, not a few of them most delicate and lovely, as could have furnished a Tower of Babel, if not built it; but *our* fabric would have had one exception—it would have had no "confusion of tongues," for tongues there were none to be heard among us—all was

silence; except when some work of striking taste, and this was not unfrequently the case, was handed round with a murmur of applause.

The harp and piano were then brought forward; and this was the most trying part of all—not from any want of skill in the performers, for the majority were perfect on both instruments, but from the nature of the performances themselves. France is not renowned for native music; yet, neither Italian genius, nor German science, has produced more exquisite snatches of melody than are to be found in some of the nooks and corners of the provinces. Paris is, like other capitals, an epitome of the world; but Languedoc, the wild country of Auvergne, the Vosges mountains, the hidden and quiet vales of Normandy, and even the melancholy sands of the Breton, have airs of singular and characteristic sweetness. Gretry and Rousseau were but their copyists. Sorrow, solitude, and love, are every where; and their inspiration is worth all the orchestras in the globe.

Those simple airs were more congenial to the depressed spirits of the whole assemblage than the most showy bravuras; and, sung by those handsome creatures—for beauty adds a charm to every thing—they retained me spell-bound. But, on the performers, and their circle of hearers, the effect was indescribable. All the world knows, that there is nothing which revives memories, like music. But, those were the airs which they had heard and sung from their infancy; the airs of their early companionships, hopes, and, perhaps loves; sung in their gardens, their palaces, at their parents' knees, by the cradles of their child-

ren, at their firesides; every where combining with the heart. Sung now in their exile, they brought back to each heart some recollection of the happiest scenes and fondest ties, of its existence. No power of poetry, nor even of the pencil, could have brought the past so deeply, so touchingly, with such living sensibility, before them. *There*, at least, was no acting, no display, no feigned feeling—their country, their friends, the perils of husband and brother in the field, the anguish, almost the agony, of woman's affection—and what can equal that affection?—was in the gestures and countenances of all before me. Some wept silently and abundantly; some buried their faces on their knees, and by the heaving of their bosoms alone, showed how they felt; some sat with their large eyes fixed on heaven, and their lips moving as in silent prayer; some almost knelt, with hands clasped and eyes bent down, in palpable supplication. Stranger as I was to them and theirs, all this was touching, and even painful, to me. I felt myself doubly an intruder, and was thinking how I might best glide away, when I saw Mariamne, in an attempt like my own, to move, suddenly fall at the feet of the duchess. She had fainted. I carried her into the open air, where she soon recovered. "Do you wish to return, Mariamne?" said I. She looked at me with amazement. "Return! it would kill me. Let us go home." I placed her on her horse, and we moved quietly and sadly away.

"That was a strange scene," said I, after a long interval of silence.

"Very," was the laconic reply.

"I am afraid it distressed you," I observed.

"I would not have seen it for any consideration, if I could have known what it was," she answered, with a new gush of tears. "Yet what must my feelings be to theirs? They lose every thing."

"But they bear the loss nobly. Still they have not lost all, when they can excite such sympathy in the mind of England. They have found at least an asylum; but what was the object of this singular meeting?"

"Oh, who can tell what they are dreaming of in their distraction?" she said, with a deep sigh. "It was probably, to turn their talents to some account; to send their works to London, and live by them—poor things, how little they know of London!—or, perhaps, to try their chance as teachers, and break their hearts in the trial. Revolutions are terrible things!" We lapsed into silence again.

"I pity most the more advanced in life," I resumed. "They have been so long accustomed to the splendours of Paris, that living here must be felt with incurable humiliation. The young are more elastic, and bear misfortune by the mere spirit of youth; and the lovely find friends every where. Did you observe the noble air, the almost heroine look, of that incomparable girl, who first showed her drawing?" Mariamne shot a quick glance at me.

"You have quite forgotten her name, I suppose?" said she, with a scrutinizing look.

"Not wholly. I think the duchess called her Clotilde."

"I shall set you at ease, sir, upon that point," said

she smartly. "But, of one thing I can assure you, and it is, that she is engaged to be married to her second cousin, the Marquis de Montrecour.—So, you see, it is scarcely worth your while to inquire any thing more of her name, as she is about to change it so soon; but it is De Tourville, a descendant of the renowned admiral, who lost a renowned French fleet a hundred years ago. You observe, Mr. Marston, I give you most willingly all the information in my power."

I have never presumed to possess a master key to female hearts; but there was something half contemptuous, half piqued, in my fair companion's tone, and a rapid interchange of colour in her cheeks, which set me musing. She touched her horse with her fairy whip, and cantered on a few paces before me. I followed, as became a faithful squire. She suddenly reined up, and said, in the voice of one determined, that I should feel the point of the sting—"Oh, I had forgot. I beg a thousand pardons. *Yesterday* the Marquis arrived in London. His proposal reached Madame la Comtesse this morning, the young lady's mother—your *heroine*, I think you called her. The *trousseau* will probably be sent down from London in a week, unless she shall go to town to choose it; which is the more likely event, as among French ladies the *trousseau* is generally a more important matter than the gentleman; and then, I presume, you will be relieved from all *anxiety* upon the subject."

I was all astonishment. The language would have been an impertinence in any one else; yet, in the

pretty and piquant Mariamne, it was simply coquettish. At any other time or place I might have felt offended; but I was now embarrassed, wordless, and plunged in problems. Why should *I* be concerned in this news? What was the opinion of this butterfly to me? yet its sarcasm stung me: what was Clotilde to me? yet I involuntarily wished the Marquis de Montrecour at the bottom of the Channel: or what knew I of French tastes, or cared about *trousseaux?* yet, at that moment, I peevishly determined to take no more rambles in the direction of the Emigrant cottages; and to return to town at once, and see what sort of absurdity a French marriage-present looked, at my first step in Bond Street.

But this was destined to be a day of adventures. I had led my fair companion a circuit through the Downs, in the hope of reviving her by the fresh air, before we reached the villa; and we were moving slowly along over the velvet turf, and enjoying that most animating of all the breaths of sky or earth, the sea-breeze; when Mariamne's steed, one of the most highly *manèged*, and most beautiful of animals, began to show signs of restlessness, pricked up her ears, stopped suddenly, and began to snuff the gale with an inflated nostril. As if the animal had communicated its opinions to its fellow, both our horses set off at a smart trot, the trot soon became a canter, the canter a gallop. Mariamne was a capital horsewoman, and the exercise put her in spirits again. After a quarter of an hour of this volunteer gallop; from the top of one of the Downs we saw the cause —the Sussex hunt, ranging the valley at our feet.

Our horses suddenly became irrestrainable, and both rushed down the hill together. The peril of such a descent instantly caught all eyes. A broad and high fence surrounded the foot of the hill, and, as we flew wildly down, the whole hunt had stopped in evident alarm. In another moment, we had reached the fence. Mariamne's horse, making a desperate spring, flew over it. Mine failed, and threw me into the middle of the hedge. I was stunned, the sight left my eyes; and, when I opened them again, a man of a peculiarly striking countenance, and stately figure, was raising me from the ground, while an attendant was pouring brandy down my throat. My first thought was, of my unfortunate companion. "Where is the lady? Is she safe? What has become of her?" were my first exclamations. "Are you much hurt?" enquired the stranger. "No, no," I cried; "where is the lady?" "I hope by this time safe," said he; "some gentlemen of the party have followed her: her horse has run away with her; but they will doubtless overtake her in a few minutes." He ascended a small rising ground close to us, and stood gazing in the distance. "No, they are following her still. She keeps her seat. They are now taking a short cut to intercept her. They are close up—No, that mad animal of a horse has thrown them all out again, he springs over every thing; yet she still holds on. What a capital horsewoman!" While he uttered those broken exclamations, I rolled on the ground in torture. At length, after a pause, I heard him say, in a shuddering voice, "All's over! that way leads direct to the cliff."

At the words, though dizzy with pain, and scarcely able to see, I seized the bridle of the groom's horse, who had alighted to assist me; without a word, sprang on his back, and dashing in the spur was gone like an arrow. The whole group soon followed.

From the first rising ground, I saw the frightful chase continued. Mariamne's hat had fallen off, and her hair and habit were flying in the wind. She was bending to the neck of her steed, whom the pursuit of the hunt, and the sight of their red coats, had evidently frightened. He was darting, rather than galloping along, by wild bounds, evidently growing feeble, but still distancing his pursuers. Half dead with pain and terror, I could scarcely hold the bridle, and was soon overtaken by the stranger. "Sir," said he, "you are exhausted, and will never be able to overtake the unfortunate lady, in that direction. I know the country—follow me." Unable to answer, I followed; my ears ringing with a thousand sounds, and my thoughts all confusion—I was awakened from this half stupor by a tremendous outcry.

On the brow of the hill before me, were the dozen jaded riders, forced to draw rein by the steepness of the declivity, and all pointing with vehement gestures below. In the next instant, through the ravine at its foot, and within a hundred yards of the cliff, came Mariamne; still clinging to the horse, and flying like the wind. The look which she cast upon me, as she shot by, haunted me for years after, whenever an image of terror rose in my dreams. Her eyes were starting from their sockets, her lips gasping wide, her visage ghastliness itself. Another moment, and all

must be over; for at the end of the valley was the sea, a hundred and fifty feet below. I rushed after her. The sight of the sea had struck her at once. She uttered a scream, and fell with her forehead on the horse's neck. Even that movement probably checked him, for he reared, and before his feet touched the ground again I was close to him; with a frantic effort I caught his bridle, and swept his head round. Mariamne dropped, voiceless, sightless, and breathless, into my arms. The spot where she was saved, was within a single bound of the precipice!

The hunters now came round us, and all was congratulation. Our escape was pronounced "miraculous;" I was complimented on all kinds of heroism; and the stranger, evidently the chief personage of the circle, after giving the glance of a connoiseur at poor Mariamne's still pallid, yet expressive, countenance, thanked me, "for having allowed him to breathe at last, which he had not done, he believed, for some minutes, through terror." Nothing could exceed the graceful interest which he expressed in my companion's safety. His grooms were sent to look for assistance in all quarters, and it was not until a carriage had arrived from the next village, and he had seen Mariamne placed in it, that he could be persuaded to take his leave. Even in after life, when I saw him in all the splendour of the world, himself its ruling star, and heard him so often quoted as

"The glass of fashion, and the mould of form,"

I thought that he never deserved the title more, than when I saw him perform the duties of simple good-

nature to two unknown individuals on a wild heath on the Sussex shore.

This adventure, by all the laws of romance, should have made me fall in love with Mariamne, or Mariamne fall in love with me. But reality has laws of a different kind, and the good fortune of being just in time to save a lady's life, whether on horseback or on foot, whether in lake or river; whatever it might be in any other ages, is not necessarily a pledge of eternal constancy in our times. That she was grateful, I fully believe, for her nature was innocent and kind; but confession was then out of the question, for neither during our rapid drive home, nor for some days after, was she capable of uttering a word. Alarm had reduced her to a state of exhaustion, next to death. Her slight frame had been so shaken, that she was as helpless as a child; and almost the only sign of consciousness which she gave, was her shrinking from the sight of the sea, whenever she was led towards the window, and her hiding her head in her shawl, at every sound of the surge.

It may be true, that if the choice depended on her father, I should have been the possessor of her fair hand, and the heir to his half million; and equally true, that the event might have saved me a half million of troubles. Even at this hour, I sometimes cannot help thinking, how total a change must have been given to my anxious career; how many desperate struggles I should have escaped, if I had thus found my path covered, like an eastern potentate's, with cloth of gold! From my first step, how many privations, nay pangs, would have been utterly un-

known to me in climbing up the steeps of life, if I had been thus lifted on the broad and easy pinions of opulence; how little I should have suffered from that reptilism which lurks in every thicket of public life, and every where with a sting; if I had gone through existence, like another Rasselas in his valley of imperishable summer, guarded from all the inclemencies of fortune, and surrounded with all the enjoyments of man!

And yet, who can tell, that the very ease of such a destiny might not have wearied my heart, enervated my mind, and rendered me at once burdensome to myself and useless to the world? Is it not hunger, that gives the true zest to the banquet, however sumptuous; and toil that gives the true charm to the couch, however embroidered? Is not the noblest enjoyment of the noblest mind to be found, in the consciousness that we have done something in our generation; that we have contributed a stone to the pyramid of the national renown, that our lips have swelled the echoes of imperial glory? What can reconcile the man of powerful intellect to the consciousness, that he has passed through life a cipher, and left nothing behind him, but a tomb?

I had another trial to undergo, in the temper of Mordecai. The sight of a post-chaise flying along the shore, with one of the royal grooms as outrider, had brought him and all the inmates of the villa to the door. From our furious haste, it was evident, that some extraordinary circumstance had caused the long delay of their young mistress. From the entrance of the avenue, I saw Mordecai standing,

straight and silent as one of the pillars of his portico, with his arms folded, and his eye lowering under his huge brow, like one prepared for calamity. But, when the carriage drove up to the door, and I raised his helpless and ashy-coloured daughter in my arms; he gazed for an instant on her, and then, with a howl, like that of a wild animal pierced by bullet or steel, fell on his face on the ground. He evidently thought, that she was dead.

Even when, at last, she opened her feeble eyelids, smiled, and took his hand, he could scarcely be persuaded that she was still alive. He raved, he tore his hair, he vowed deathless vengeance, and the vengeance of all his race, upon the "murderer of his beloved, the child of his soul, the last scion of his name, his angel Mariamne." Rage and tears followed each other, in all the tempest of oriental fury. No explanation of mine would be listened to for a moment, and I at length gave up the attempt. The groom, however, gave the outline of the story; and Mordecai then charged me with all kinds of rashness and folly. At one time rushing forward to the couch where she lay, faintly attempting to soothe him; he would fling himself on his knees beside her, kiss her forehead, and lament all his fancied harshness to her in the course of his life. Then, suddenly starting on his feet, with the spring of a tiger, he would bound towards me; his powerful features distended with rage, his deep eye flashing, and his bony hand clenched as if it grasped a dagger, cursing the hour "when I had first set my foot under his unhappy

roof," or cast my "evil eye upon the only child of the undone Mordecai."

Even in all the fever of the scene, the thought struck me,—what would be the effect of a hundred thousand such men, sweeping with scymetar and lance over the fields of Palestine? The servants fled in terror, or lurked in different directions until the storm should be gone down. At length Mariamne, dreading an actual collision between us, rose with an effort, tottered across the room, and threw her arms round her father's neck. The old man was then conquered at once; his countenance grew calm; he sat down upon the floor, and with his daughter hiding her face in his bosom, wept silently and long. When I saw him thus quieted, I left them together, and retired to my chamber; determined to leave the discovery of his error to his returning judgment; and reinforced in my intention to depart for London even at the earliest dawn.

I employed myself for a while, in packing up my few equipments for the journey; but this was soon done, and the question was, how to get rid of the remainder of the evening. I was resolved to meet Mordecai no more; and the servant who announced that dinner was ready, was sent back with an answer, that a violent headach prevented my leaving my room. The headach was true; and I had a reluctance equally true to see the "human face divine" for that evening at least. There was one exception to that reluctance, for thoughts had begun to awake in me, from which I shrank with something little

short of terror. There was one "human face divine" which I would have made a pilgrimage round the world to see—but it was not under the roof of Mordecai. It was in one of the little cottages on which I was then looking from my window, and yet which seemed placed by circumstances at an immeasurable distance from me. It was the countenance of a stranger—one with whom I had never exchanged a word, who was probably ignorant of my existence, whom I might never see again, and yet whom I felt to be my fate. Such are the fantasies of that most fantastic of all things—the unfledged mind. But I have not taken up my pen to write either the triflings or the tendernesses of the heart. I leave to others the *idéal* of life. Mine has been the *real*, and it has been stern and struggling.

I have often been astonished at the softness, in which other minds seem to have passed their day; the ripened pasture and clustering vineyards of imagination—the mental Arcadia; in which they describe themselves as having loitered from year to year. Yet, can I have faith in this perpetual Claude Lorraine pencil—this undying verdure of the soil—this gold and purple suffusion of the sky—those pomps of the palace and the temple, with their pageants and nymphs, giving life to their landscape; while mine was a continual encounter with difficulty, a continual summons to self-control? A march, not unlike that of the climber up the side of Ætna—every step through ruins, the vestiges of former conflagration—the ground I trode, rocks that had once been flame—every advance a new trial of

my feelings or my fortitude—every stage of the ascent leading me, like the traveller, into a higher region, of sand or ashes, until, at the highest, I stood in a circle of eternal frost, with all the rich and human landscape below fading away in distance; and looked down only on a gulf of fire.

CHAPTER VIII.

"But, in the porch did evermore abide,
A hideous giant, dreadful to behold,
That stopt the entrance with his hideous stride;
And, with the terror of his countenance bold,
Full many did affray, that else fain enter wold—
His name was Danger."

FAIRY QUEEN.

As I sat at my window, gazing vaguely on the sea, then unruffled by a breath, and realizing all the images of evening serenity; a flight of curlews darted screaming by, and awoke me from my reverie. I took my gun, and followed them along the sand. My sportsmanship was never of the most zealous order, and my success on this occasion did not add much to the mortality of the curlews. But the fresh air revived me, I felt my elasticity of foot and frame return, and I followed for some miles along the windings of the shore. At last I had reached the pool where they, probably more aware of the weather than I was, seemed about to choose their quarters for the night. I took my ground, and was preparing to attack them with both barrels; when a gust, that swept with sudden violence between the

hills, nearly flung me down, and scattered all my prey, screaming and startled, on the wing far into the interior. I had now leisure to look to myself. The sea was rolling in huge billows to the shore. The sun had sunk as suddenly, as if it had been drowned. The hills were visible but for a moment, gleamed ghastly in the last light, and were then covered with mist. One of those storms common in autumn, and which brings all the violence of winter into the midst of the loveliest season of the year, had come on, and I was now to find shelter where I could, in the wilderness.

I was vigorous and hardy, but my situation began to be sufficiently embarrassing; for I was at least half a dozen miles from home; and the fog, rising from the waters, soon rendered the whole face of the country one cloud. To move a single step now was hazardous. I could judge even of my nearness to the ocean, only by its roar. The rain soon added to my perplexities, for it began to descend, less in showers than in sheets. I tried the shelter of the solitary thicket in these wilds, but was quickly driven from my position. I next tried the hollow of a sand-hill, but there again I was beaten by the enemy; and before I had screened myself from the gust a quarter of an hour, a low rumbling sound, and the fall of fragments of the hill above, awoke me to the chance of being buried alive. I now disclaimed all shelter, and painfully gained the open country, with no other guide than my ear, which told me that I was leaving the sea further and further behind; but hearing the rush of many a rivulet, turned into a river, before me,

and in no slight peril of finishing my history in the depths of some overcharged ditch, to find my bed in the sea after all.

All vexations seem trifling when they are once over; but, for full two hours of this pelted pilgrimage, I felt sensations, which might have cured me of solitary sporting for the rest of my existence.

At the end of those hours, which appeared to me of ten times the length, I heard the barking of a dog; and rejoicing in it, as one of the most welcome of all possible sounds, I worked, felt, and waded my way to the door of a building; at which, without ceremony, I asked for entrance. My application was for some time unanswered; but I heard a rustling within, which made me repeat my request in various ways. After trying my eloquence in vain, I offered a guinea for a bed. A window was now opened above, and showed a pair of heads, which in their night-gear strongly reminded me of the grandmother wolf in Little Red Riding-Hood—myself, of course, being the innocent victim. I now doubled my offer, my whole purse amounting to no more; and was let in.

My hosts were two; one, an old woman, hideous with age and ferocity of feature, but the other a young one, with a handsome but bold countenance, whose bronze had obviously been borrowed as much from free living as from the sea-breeze. The women at first were rather reluctant to enter into any conversation; but when, to make my reception welcome, I laid the two guineas down on the table, their hearts became thawed at once, and their tongues flowed;

my wet clothes were exchanged for the fisherman's wardrobe, and a tolerable supper was put on the table. Some luxuries, which I might not have found under roofs of more pretension, were produced one after the other; and I thus had Hamburg hung beef, Westphalia ham, and even St. Petersburg caviare; preserved pine-apple formed my desert, and a capital glass of claret "for the gentleman;" of which the ladies, however, professed themselves incapable of discovering the merit; was followed by an equally capital dram of brandy, which they evidently understood much better.

In the midst of our festivity, the dog sprang to the door, and a sound like that of a horn, or conch shell, was heard through the roar of the gale. The women started from their seats in evident consternation, swept away the remnants of the supper, and conveyed me into an adjoining closet; where they begged of me to keep close, not to speak a syllable, let what would happen, and, as I valued my life and theirs, not to mention thereafter whatever I might see or hear. It was now plain, that I was in the house of smugglers; and as those were notoriously people not to be trifled with, I made my promises of non-intervention with perfect sincerity.

I was scarcely in my nook, when the party arrived. They were six or seven—their conversation was the common bluster and boisterousness of their trade—and between their demands for supper, their coarse jokes, and their curses at the lubberliness or loitering of their associates from the other side of the Channel, (for, with all their accomplicesship, they had the true

John Bull notion of the seamanship of Monsieur,) they kept the house in an uproar. They expected a cargo from Calais that night, and the idea of losing so favourable an opportunity as the tempest offered, rendered them especially indignant. Scouts were sent out from time to time to look for signals, but nothing appeared. At length the brandy was beginning to take effect on their brains, and their rough jokes rose into quarrel. A charge of treachery produced the drawing of cutlasses, and I heard them slashing at each other; but the right Nantz which had inflamed the quarrel, rendered it comparatively harmless, until one lost his balance, rolled headlong against my door, and burst it in. There stood I, visible to all; and the sight produced a yell, in which the epithets of "spy, exciseman, custom-house shark," and a whole vocabulary, all equally remote from panegyric, were showered upon me. I should probably have been cut down by some of the blades which flashed before me, but that I had accidentally carried my gun into the closet, and was evidently determined to fight it out. This produced a parley: I told my tale, and as it was corroborated by the women, who came forward trembling at the sight of their savage masters, and spoke with the sincerity of fear; it saved me further encounter, and I was merely enjoined, to pledge my word, that I should not betray them.

The compromise was scarcely brought to a conclusion, when the discharge of a pistol was heard outside; and as this was their signal, the whole party prepared to leave the house. I now expected to be left to such slumbers as I could find in the midst of

rocking roofs, and rattling doors and windows. But, this was not to be. After a short consultation at the door, one of them returned, and desired me to throw on a fisherman's dreadnought which was smoking beside the fire; and follow him. Against this, however, I vehemently protested.

"Why, lookye, sir," said the fellow, smoothing his tone into civility, "there is no use in that sparrow-shooting thing there, against about fifty of us; you must come along."

I asked him, "could he suppose, that I was a spy, or that, if I gave my word, I should not keep it?"

"No," said the fellow, "I take you to be a gentleman; but what story shall we have for the captain, if we tell him that we left a stranger behind us, and that after he heard all our plans for the night's work, we left him to go off to the custom-house, with his news for the surveyor?"

This seemed rational enough, but I still held my garrison. The fellow's face flushed, and, with something of an oath, he went to the door, gave a whistle, and returned next minute with a dozen powerful fellows, all armed. Contest was now useless, and I agreed to go with them until they met the "captain," who was then to settle the question of my liberty. The women curtseyed me to the door, as if they rather regretted the loss of their companion, and were, at least, not much pleased by being cut off from further inroads on a purse which had begun by paying so handsomely, not knowing that it was utterly stript. We marched to the point of waiting for the bark from Calais.

The storm had increased in violence, and the howling of the wind, and the thunder of the billows on the shore, were tremendous. Not a word was spoken, and if it had been, the roar would have prevented it from being heard; the night was pitch dark, and the winding paths along which we rather slid than walked, would not have been easy to find even during the day. But custom is every thing; and my party strode along with the security of perfect knowledge. The country, too, seemed alive round us. The cottages, it is true, were all silent and shut up, as we hurried through; but many a light we saw from the lowly cottage, and many a whistle we heard over the heath. Cows' horns were also in evident requisition, for trumpets; and in the intervals of the gusts, I could hear the creaking of cart-wheels in the distance. It is to be remembered, that this was notoriously *the* smuggling county of England, that those were the famous times of smuggling, and that the money made by evading the king's customs often amounted to a moderate fortune in the course of a single speculation.

The whole country had apparently two existences, a day and a night one; a day and a night population; the clown and his tillage in the light, the smuggler and his trade in the dark; and the same peasant frequently exhibiting a versatility, for which John Bull seldom gets credit.—The man of the plough-tail and the spade, drudging and dull through one half of his being; the same man, after an hour or two of sleep, springing from his bed at midnight, handling the sail and helm, baffling his Majesty's

cruisers at sea, and making a *mêlée* with the officers of the customs on shore—active, quick, and bold, a first-rate seaman, brave as a lion, fleet as a hare, and generally having the best of it, in the exercise of both qualities.

Our numbers had evidently grown as we advanced, and at length a whistle brought us to a general stand. One of the party now touched my sleeve, and said, —"Sir, you must follow me." The cliff was so near, that thoughts, not much to the credit of my companions, came into my head, and I drew back. The man observed it, and said, "The captain *must* see you, sir. If we wanted to do you any mischief, an ounce of lead might have settled the business an hour ago. But if we are free-traders, we are not bloodhounds. You may trust *me;* I served on board of Rodney's ship."

Of course this was an appeal to my honour, which could not be refused without hurting his etiquette most grievously, and I followed. After two or three windings through an excavation in the cliff, we came in front of a blazing fire, screened from external eyes by a pile of ship timbers. Before the fire was a table with bottles, and at it a man busily writing. On raising his eyes, the recognition was instant and mutual. I saw, in his strong features, my companion on the roof of the Royal Sussex Stage, whose disappearance had been the subject of so much inquiry. He palpably knew a good deal more of me than I did of him, and, after a moment's embarrassment and thrusting papers and pistols into the drawer of a table, he asked me to sit down; hurried to the mouth

of the cavern, heard the story of my capture from the sailor, and returned—with his forehead rather smoothed.

"I am sorry, sir," said he, "that the absurdity of my people has given you a walk at this time of night; but they are rough fellows, and their orders are, to be on the *qui vive*."

My answer was, "That I had been treated civilly; and, as circumstances had brought it about, I did not so much dislike the adventure after all."

"Well spoken, young gentleman," was his reply. "Circumstances rule every thing in this world, and one thing I shall tell you; you might be in worse hands, even in this country, than in ours. Pray," added he, with a peculiar look, "how did you leave my friend Mordecai?"

I laughed, and he followed my example. Tossing off a glass of wine, and filling up a bumper for me—

"Well, then," said he, "suppose we drink the Jew's health. I gave you a rather strange character of him, I think. But still, I make a difference between a man who volunteers sharp practice, and a man on whom it is thrust by the world. Circumstances, you see, are my reason for every thing. Make a hard bargain with Mordecai, and ten to one but you are caught in his trap. Throw yourself on his mercy; and, if the whim takes him, I have known him as generous as any other."

I replied, that his generosity or his craft were now matters of very little importance to me, for I had determined to return to London by daybreak. He

expressed surprise, gaily asked whether I was insensible to the charms of the fair Mariamne, and recommended my trying to make an impression there, "if I desired to have as much stock as would purchase the next loan." Our further conversation was interrupted by the sound of a gun from seaward, and we went out together.

The sight was now awful; the tide had risen, and the storm was at its height. We could scarcely keep on our feet, except by clinging to the rocks. The bursts of wind came almost with the force of cannon shot; and the men, who now seemed to amount to several hundreds, were seen by the glare of the lightnings grasping each other in groups along the shore and the hills, the only mode in which they could save themselves from being swept away like chaff. The rain had now ceased its continual pour, but it burst in sharp, short showers, that smote us with the keenness of hail. The sea, to the horizon, was white with its own dashings, and every mountain surge that swept to the shore was edged with light—the whole, one magnificent sheet of phosphor and foam. Yet, awful as all was, all was so exciting, that I actually enjoyed the scene. The excitement grew stronger still, when the report of two guns from seaward, the signal for the approach of the lugger, followed almost immediately by a broadside, told us that we were likely to see an action before her arrival. As she rose rapidly upon the horizon, her signals showed that she was chased by a Government cruiser, and one of double her size. Of the superior weight of metal in the pursuer, we soon saw

sufficient proofs in her heavy fire. Except by superior manœuvring, there was clearly no chance for the lugger. But, in the mean time, all that could be done on shore was done. A huge fire sprang up instantly on the cliff; muskets were discharged, and shouts were given, to show that her friends were on the alert. But, the captain's countenance fell, and as he strode backwards and forwards along the shore, I could hear his wrath in continued grumblings.

"Fool and brute!" he cried, "this all comes of his being unable to hold his tongue. The skipper has blabbed, otherwise we should not have had any thing better than a row-boat in our wake. He will be captured to a certainty. Well, he will find the comfort of being a cabin-boy or a fore-mast man on board the fleet for the rest of his days. I should not trust him with a Thames lighter, if ever he gets on shore again."

The cannonade began now to be returned by the lugger, and the captain's spirits revived. Coming up to me, he said, wiping the thick perspiration from his brow, "This, sir, is a bad night's job, I am afraid; but if the blockhead in command of that lugger had only sea-room, I doubt whether he would not give the revenue craft enough to do yet.—If he would but stand off and try a fair run for it—but in this bay, in this beggarly nook, where a man cannot steer without rubbing his elbows upon either shore, he gives his seamanship no chance."

He now stood, with his teeth firm set, and his night-

glass to his eye, bluff against the storm. A broadside came rolling along.

"By Jove! one would think that he had heard me," he exclaimed. "Well done, Dick Longyarn! The Shark has got that in its teeth. He is leading the cruiser a dance. What sort of report the revenue gentleman will have to make to my Lords Commissioners to-morrow or the next day, I should wish to know."

The crowd on shore followed the manœuvres with not less interest. Every glass was at the eye; and I constantly heard their grumblings and disapprovals, as some luckless turn of the helm exposed the lugger to the cruiser's fire. "She will be raked; she will lose her masts," was the general groan. As they neared the shore, the effect of every shot was visible. "There goes the mainsail all to ribands; the yards are shot in the slings." Then public opinion would change. "Fine fellow that! The Shark's main-top shakes like a whip." In this way all went on for nearly an hour; which, however, I scarcely felt to be more than a few minutes. "The skipper in command of that boat," said the captain at my side, "is one of the best seamen on the coast, as bold as a bull, and will fight any thing; but he is as leaky as a sieve; and when the wine gets into him in a tavern at Calais or Dunkirk, if he had the secrets of the Privy Council, they would all be at the mercy of the first scoundrel who drinks his health."

"But he fights his vessel well," I observed.

"So he does," was the reply; "but if he should

have that lugger captured before a keg touches the sand, and if the whole goes into the custom-house instead of reaching the cellars of the owners, it will be all his fault."

The ships were at length so near us, that we could easily see the splinters flying from the sides of both, and the havoc made among the rigging was fearful; yet, except for the anxiety, nothing could be more beautiful to us than the manœuvres of both. The doublings of the hare before the greyhound, the flight of the pigeon before the hawk,—all the common images of pursuit and evasion were trivial to the doublings and turnings, the attempts to make fight, and the escape, at the moment when capture seemed inevitable. The cruiser was gallantly commanded, and her masterly management upon a lee shore, often forced involuntary admiration even from the captain.

"A clever lad that revenue man, I must own," said he; "but it is well worth his while, for if he catch that lugger, he will have laid hold of twenty thousand pounds' worth of as hard-earned money as ever crossed the Channel. I myself have a thousand, in silk on board."

"Then all is not brandy that she brings over?"

"Brandy!" said the captain, with a bitter smile. "They would be welcome to all the brandy she carries to-night, if that were all. She has a cargo of French silks, French claret, ay, and French gold, that she must fight for while she has a stick standing."

At this moment, the sky, dark as it was before, grew tenfold darker; and a cloud, that gave me the exact image of a huge black velvet pall, suddenly

dropped down and completely covered both vessels; no firing was heard for a time, even the yell of the gust had sunk; nothing was heard but the billow, as it groaned along the shore. The same thought occurred to us both at once. "Those brave boys are all in their coffin together," slowly murmured my companion. There was neither shout nor even word among the crowd; while every eye and ear was strained, and the men began to run along the water's edge to find a fragment of the wrecks, or assist some struggler for life in the surge. But the cloud, which absolutely lay upon the water, suddenly burst open, with a roar of thunder, as if split from top to bottom by the bolt, and both vessels were seen. A sheet of lightning, which, instead of the momentary flash, hung quivering from the zenith, showed them with a lurid distinctness infinitely clearer than day. Every remaining shroud and rope, every wound of mast or yard, every shot-hole, nay, every rib and streak of the hulls, was as distinctly visible, as if they had been illuminated from within. But their decks, as the heave of the surge bowed them towards us, showed a fearful spectacle. The dying and the dead, flung along the gangways, the wounded clinging to the gun carriages or masts, a few still loading the guns, which neither had now hands enough to manœuvre; yet both ships still flying on, shattered and torn, and looking, in the wild light, like two gigantic skeletons.

The lugger now fired a rocket, and sent up a striped flag, the signal of distress. A cry for "The boats!" was echoed along the shore, and eight or ten were speedily started from their hiding-places, and dragged

down the shingle. Stout hearts and strong hands were in them without loss of time, and they dashed into the storm. But their efforts were wholly useless. No strength of oars could stand against such a gale. Some were swamped at once, the men hardly escaping with their lives. The rest were tossed like dust upon the wind, and dashed high on shore. All was hopeless. Another rocket went up, and by its ghastly blaze I caught a glimpse of the captain. He had been either forced from his hold on the rocks by the wind, or fallen through exhaustion. His bronzed face was now as pale as the sand on which he lay; he was the very image of despair. Thinking that he had fainted, and fearing that, in this helpless state, he might be swept away by the next surge, I laid hold of his hand, to drag him higher up the cliff after me. As if the grasp had given him renewed life, he sprang on his feet, and muttering in a distracted tone, which I alone could hear, "Better be drowned than ruined!" he cried to the men, with the voice of a maniac, "Boys, sink or swim, here I go! Five guineas for every man who gets on board." Tearing off his watch coat, he rushed forward at the words, and plunged headlong into the billow. There was a general rush after him; some were thrown back on the sand, but about half the number were enabled to reach the lugger. We quickly saw the effect of even this reinforcement. At the very point of time when the cruiser was about to lay her on board, she came sharply round by the head, and discharged her broadside within pistol-shot. I could see the remaining mast of the cruiser stagger; it made two or three heaves, like a

drunkard trying to recover his steps; then came a crash, and it went over the side. The vessel recoiled, and being now evidently unable to steer, the storm had her at its mercy. The last that we saw of her was a hull, rolling and staggering away down the Channel, firing guns of distress, and going headforemost towards the Bay of Biscay.

Need I say, with what triumph the lugger was hauled up the sand, or how her bold commander and hardy crew were received? But, while a carouse was preparing for them—and, it must be owned, that if sailing and fighting were claims, they had earned their suppers—the business portion of the firm was in full activity. From the waggon down to the wheelbarrow, every country means of carriage was in motion without delay. I had been hitherto by no means aware of, what Johnson would probably have called "the vehicular opulence" of the Sussex shore. Nor had I ever a more striking illustration of the proverbial lightness of the work of many hands; a process which, in his solemn lips, would probably have been, "Sir, congregated thousands laugh at individual difficulty; delay vanishes before united labour, and time is an element of toil no more."

The clearance of the cargo would have put all the machinery of a royal dockyard to shame. As for the activity of the custom-house, it would have been the movement of a tortoise, to the rapidity of whatever is most rapid in unpacking or pilfering. But pilfering here we had none; we were all "men of honour;" and undoubtedly, if any propensity to mistake the *tuum* for the *meum* had been exhibited, there were

among us sufficient of the stamp of my old friend "who had served with Rodney," to have flung the culprit where men prey no more; whatever may be done by porpoises.

But, as I had no wish to be a party to what, with all its gaiety and gallantry, I felt to be a rough infraction of the law, I now begged permission to make my way homewards. It was given at once, with even some expressions of gratitude for my having, as it was termed, stood by them to the last; and a guide was ordered, as an additional civility. "You will have five miles to walk," said the captain, as he shook hands with me; but Grapnel here will take you the shortest way, and it will be light in an hour. You need say nothing of this business to Mordecai, who makes a point of being deaf and dumb whenever it suits him; though, between ourselves."——The captain's prudence here checked the overflow of his confidence. "I merely mean to say, that if you drink any particularly fine claret, in a day or two, at his table, you will have to thank the lugger, La Belle Jeannette, for it. *Au revoir.*"

My guide and I pushed on into the darkness. He was a bluff, open-hearted fellow, with all the smuggler's hatred of the magistracy, and taking great delight in telling how often they failed in their attempts to stop the "free trade," which he clearly regarded as the only trade worthy of a man. His account of the feats of his comrades; their escapes from the claws of the customs; their facetious tricks on the too vigilant among the magistrates; and the real luxury in which, with all their life of hardship, they found

opportunities of indulging, would have edified a modern tour writer, and possibly relieved even the dreariness of a county historian. Among other matters, too, he let out, that he paid me a prodigious compliment in accompanying me; as this night's smuggling was one of the grand exploits of the year; and casting a "longing, lingering look behind," where a distant glimmer marked the scene of operations, he evidently halted between the two opinions, whether to go on, or return. "What a glorious night!" he exclaimed, as he turned his bald forehead to a sky black as Erebus, and roaring with whirlwind. "Talk of sunshine, or moonshine, compared with this!" Another burst of rain, or flash of lightning, would evidently have rendered the scene too captivating. Both came, and I was palpably on the point of losing my guide; when he stopped short, and, in a half whisper, asked me, "whether I heard any thing?" Before I could return a word, he had flung himself on the ground, with his ear to the sward, and, after a moment's listening, said, "here they come!"

"Who come? There is neither sight nor sound between us and Brighton. Are you thinking of the custom-house officers?"

The look which I had the benefit of seeing, by a blue blaze from the zenith; and the tone of infinite scorn, in which he slowly repeated the words, "custom-house officers," were incomparable. "Afraid of *them!*" said he, as he rose from the wet heather, "as much afraid as the cat is of the mice. No, those are the dragoons from Lewes."

"Well, what have we to care about them?"

"Care?" said he, with a mixture of frown and grin.

"Only that you are the captain's friend, and I daresay, are going at this time of night to do a job for him in Brighton yourself; I should think, young gentleman, you were only laughing at Sam Grapnel. Better not! Why, you see, though the fellows with their pens behind their ears are no more than six-watered gin to us, the dragoons are another sort of thing.—I must go back. So, young gentleman, I wish you a very good night."

The oddity of the wish, in the midst of this elemental uproar, made me laugh, shivering as I was. Yet, to be left to find my own way at such a time, was startling. I offered him money.

"At another opportunity, sir," said he, rather pacified by the offer. "But, if they come upon the captain unawares, they will find every thing ready to their hands; all at sixes and sevens just now. It will take an hour or two before he can clear the cargo off the ground; and there goes the whole speculation. Don't you hear them? You have only to drop your ear to the ground, and know the whole affair. A lubber deserted from us a week ago, and no doubt he has laid the information."

I lay down, and clearly enough heard the trampling of horses, and in considerable numbers. My own situation was now somewhat embarrassing. They were evidently coming up in our direction; and, to be found past midnight, armed, (for my gun had been restored to me,) in company with an unquestionable smuggler, must have made appearances tell strongly against me. But my companion's mind

was made up, with the promptitude of a life which has no time to waste on thinking.

"I must go back this moment, or all our comrades will be taken in the fact. And, take my advice, you had better do the same; for go I will. The captain sha'n't have it to say, that I let him be caught without warning."

I still hesitated, and he still urged.

"You can do no better, sir; for if you stand here five minutes longer, you will either be taken, or you will lose the number of your mess, by a carbine slug, or the slash of a sabre; while, if you turn back, you will have ten times the chance of escape, along the shore."

I could now distinctly hear the clatter of hoofs, and the jingling of bridles. There was no time to deliberate; I certainly felt no inclination to be the means of the captain's ruin or death; and I followed my guide, who set off with the swiftness of a deer.

We soon reached the shore, where our intelligence struck considerable alarm. "I thought that it would be so," said the captain; "I had notice from a friend in the customs already, that a spy was at work, and it was to this that we owed the chase of the lugger. For the revenue officers I care not a straw, but the dragoons are to be avoided when we can. We may fight upon occasion, it is true, but we choose our own time for it. We have now only to get out of the way; and clever as they are, they may find us not so easily laid hold of."

Turning to me, he said, "I am sorry, Mr. Marston, that you have been brought into all this bustle; but

time and chance happen to us all. At all events, it will show you something of life, which you would scarcely have seen in the Jew's villa, though he, too, could show you a good deal. We shall see each other again, but let this night be forgotten, and now, good-by once more." Then turning to my guide, he said, "This young gentleman must be seen safe along the cliff; stay with him until he sends you back again.

"Come, lads, all hands to work!" he now shouted to a group who stood at a little distance; "are the tar-barrels ready?" "Ay, ay," was the answer. They trundled three or four barrels along the shore, dragged them up the face of the cliff, and I had scarcely left them a hundred yards behind, when they were in a blaze. The trampling of the dragoons was now heard coming on at full speed.

"There," said Grapnel, "I'll engage that he tricks them at last; while they are moving up to the fire, the cargo is moving off to the store. He will leave half a dozen kegs for them to make prize of, while he is carrying away clear and clean as much silk as would make gowns for all the corporation of London, and as much claret as would give the gout to"—— the gust choked the remainder of the comparison.

He had probably been accustomed to performances of this order, for his conjecture was exactly verified. From the spot where we stood, to get, as he called it, a last peep at "the free-traders bamboozling the dragoons," we could see cavalry galloping up to the blaze, evidently sure of having made a capture. A few carts in the ravine below next caught their eye.

Another beacon on another hill soon threw up its flame, and a party galloped off to examine the new phenomenon. Two or three more blazed in succession, and increased their perplexity.

"I must have one shot at them before I go," said Grapnel, "if I die for it;" and, before I could utter a word to prevent him, he discharged his pistol. This was an unlucky shot; for it drew the attention of a party of dragoons, whom we had not before seen, in the hollow beneath. After returning a shot or two, they darted down upon the rear of the last convoy, which was silently moving under the shadow of the cliffs, with the captain and some of its stoutest followers at its head. The business now began to be serious. The captain and his men, determined not to lose their venture, made a bold resistance. The dragoons came riding in from all quarters, but the ground was unfavourable for them, hemmed in as it was on one side by the sea, and on the other by the cliff; besides the encumbrance of the carts and waggons, behind which the cutlasses of the smugglers were fully a match for the sabre.

If I could have thought of any thing but the hazard of those unfortunate fellows, the scene from the spot where I stood was sufficiently striking. The blaze from the tar-barrels showed a long extent of the Downs, with the troops scattered and riding among them on all sides. Long ridges of light were thrown over the waters, while, immediately below me, the flashes of the smugglers' muskets and the soldiers' pistols were incessant. It was a battle on a minor scale.

But it is dangerous to be in the way of bullets, even as an amateur; for, as I stood gazing down, I felt a sudden stroke, like a shock of electricity. I staggered, and was on the point of rolling over the cliff, when Grapnel darted towards me. I just felt myself grasped by him, and lost all recollection.

On recovering my senses again, I was in Mordecai's villa; where I had been brought by some fishermen on the morning of the skirmish; and who, asking no questions, and being asked none, had deposited me, bandaged and bruised as I was, at the door of the villa. If I was not sensible of this service, it was, at least, a vast relief to the Jew; who had begun to think that his violence had urged me on some desperate course. As hasty in his repentance as in his wrath, he had no sooner become rational enough to hear his daughter's story, than he was eager to make me the *amende*, by all the means in his power. Perhaps he would have even lent me money, if I had met him in this penitential mood; but I was not to be found. The sight of my corded trunk convinced him that I had taken mortal offence, and he grew more uneasy still. As the night fell, a general inquiry was made amongst the fishermen's cabins; and as, on those occasions, no one ever desires to send away the inquirer without giving himself, at least, credit for an answer, every one gave an answer according to his fashion. Some thought, that they had seen me in a skiff on the shore; where I was, of course, blown out to sea, and, by that time, probably carried to the chops of the Channel. Others were "sure," that they had seen me on the

outside of the London mail; an equally embarrassing conjecture; for it happened that the horses, startled by the lightning, had dashed the carriage to pieces a few miles off. Mordecai's own conception was, that the extravagance of his rage had driven me to the extravagance of despair; and that I was by this time making my bed below the surges which roared and thundered through the dusk. And some scraps of verse which had been found in my apartment—"Sonnets to an eyebrow," and reveries on subjects of which my host had as much knowledge as his own ledger, were set down by him as palpable proofs of that frenzy to which he assigned my demise. Thus, his night was a disturbed one, passed alternately in watching over his daughter's feeble signs of recovery, and hurrying to the window at every sound of every footstep which seemed to give a hope of my return. The sight of me in the morning, laid at his hall door, relieved his heart of a burden; and, though the silence and rapid retreat of my bearers gave him fully the suspicion, that I had somehow or other been involved in the desperate business of the last twelve hours; with whose particulars he had, by some means or other, become already acquainted; he determined to watch, and, if need be, protect me, until I could leave his house in safety.

My recovery was slow. A ball had struck me on the breast, and, though it had luckily glanced off, it had produced a contusion which long threatened dangerous consequences. For a month, I remained nearly insensible. At length, I began to move, health returned, the sea-breeze gave me new sensations of

life; and, but for one circumstance, I should have felt all the enjoyment of that most delightful of all contrasts—between the languor of a sick bed, and the renewed pouring of vitality through the frame.

On my recovery, I found an accumulation of letters on my table. Some were the mere commonplaces of correspondence; some were from sporting friends in the neighbourhood of the castle, detailing with due exactness the achievements of their dogs and horses; three were from the Horse Guards at successive intervals of a week—the first announcing that my commission in the Guards had received the signatures of the proper authorities;—the second, giving me a peremptory order to join immediately; and—the third, formally announcing, that, as I had neither joined, nor assigned any reason for my absence, my commission had been cancelled!

This was an unexpected blow, and, in my state of weakness, might have been a fatal one, but for my having found, at the bottom of the heap, a letter in the handwriting of Vincent. This excellent man, as if he had anticipated my vexations, wrote in a style singularly adapted to meet them at the moment. After slight and almost gay remarks on country occurrences, and some queries relative to my ideas of London, he touched on the difficulties which beset the commencement of every career, and the supreme necessity of patience, and a determination to be cheerful, under all.

"One rule is absolutely essential—never to mourn over the past, or mope over the future. 'Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof,' is a maxim

of incomparable wisdom. Never think of the failures of yesterday, but to avoid them to-morrow; and never speculate on the failures of to-morrow, but to remember that you have outlived the failures of to-day. The French philosophers are now preaching around the world, that 'knowledge is power,' and such it is, but, only as gunpowder is power; a dangerous invention which blew up the inventor. It requires to be wisely managed. English experience will tell you, more to the purpose, that 'perseverance is power;' for with it, all things can be done, without it nothing. I remember, in the history of some great oriental chieftain, an incident which, to me, has always had the force of an apothegm.

"In his early life, when reduced to the utmost distress, defeated in battle, and without a follower, he once threw himself into the ruins of a Tartar caravansera, where he resolved to give up all further effort and die. When as he lay on the ground, sunk in despair, his eye was caught by the attempts of an ant to drag a grain of corn up to its nest in the wall. The load was too great for it, and the ant and the grain fell to the ground together. The trial was renewed, and both fell again. It was renewed ninety and nine times, and on the hundredth it succeeded, and the grain was carried into the nest. The thought instantly struck the prostrate chieftain, 'Shall an insect struggle ninety and nine times until it succeeds, while I, a man, and the descendant of heroes, give up all hope, after a single battle?' He sprang from the ground, and by a curious freak of fortune, found a troop of his followers outside, who had been

looking for him throughout the wilderness. Scymetar in hand, he threw himself on his pursuers, swelled his troop into an army, his army into myriads, and finished, by being the terror of Europe, the conqueror of Asia, and the wonder of the world." The letter ended with general enquiries into the things of the day, and all good wishes for my career.

It is astonishing, what an effect is sometimes produced by advice, given at the exact period when we want it. This letter was that "word in season" of which the "wisest of men" speaks; and I felt all its influence, in my rescue from despondency. Its simplicity reached my heart, sooner than the most laboured language, and its manliness seemed a direct summons to whatever was manly in my nature. I determined thenceforth, to try fortune to the utmost, to task my powers to the last, to regard difficulties as only the exercise that was intended to give me strength, and to render every success only a step to success higher still. That letter had pushed me another stage towards manhood.

With the Horse Guards' papers in my hand, and the letter of my old friend placed, in a kind of boyish romance, in my bosom, I went to meet Mordecai and his daughter. The Jew shook his bushy brows over the rescript which seemed to put a perpetual extinguisher on my military hopes. But Mariamne was the gayest of the gay, on what she termed my "fortunate ill-fortune." She had now completely recovered; said she remembered nothing of her accident but "the heroism," as she expressed it, "on my part which had saved her, to thank me;" and between

her gratitude and her vivacity, might have given a spectator the idea, that M. Lafontaine was rapidly losing ground with that creature of open lips and incessant smiles. Her harp was brought, she was an accomplished performer, and she surprised me by the taste and tenderness with which she sang a succession of native melodies, collected in her rambles from Hungary to the Hartz; and from the Mediterranean to the Alps and Pyrenees. One air struck me as so beautiful, that I still remember the words They were, I believe, from Garcilasso :—

" De las casualidades
Y las quimeras,
Naeen felieidades
Que no se esperan.
Siempre se adviene,
Que donde esta la vida,
Se halla la muerte."

Then with that quick turn of thought which forms so touching a feature of the love-poetry of Spain—

" Tus ojos a mis ojos,
Miran atentos,
Y callando se dicen
Sus sentimientos.
Cosa es bien rara,
Que sin hablar se entienden
Nuestras dos almas."

The Spaniard, in his own language, is inimitable. I cannot come nearer the soft Southern than in these ballad lines—

" Alas,—how sweet, yet strange!
Joy in the lap of woe!

Love is all change!
Like roses laid on snow,
Nipt by the cruel wind;
Bloom, odour, all, resign'd.

"Yet, close those eyes of thine,
Else, though no accents fall,
These stealing tears from mine
Will tell thee all!
Strange, that what lips deny,
Is spoken by the telltale eye."

Whether the little "Seguidilla" meant any thing in the lips of the songstress, I do not presume to say. But the hearts, I should say, of all pretty women, expect admiration as naturally as an idol receives incense; and as a part of the incense now and then descends upon the worshippers themselves, the sentiment may become in some degree mutual. However, with all my perceptions alive to her merits, and she had many, the cause of my gallant French friend was perfectly safe in my hands. I never had much vanity in those matters; and even if I had, the impression already made by another had made me impregnable, for the time, to the whole artillery of eyes.

Yet, the evening which I thus spent, gave me the first genuine idea of domestic happiness, which I had ever received. I had seen but little of it at home. There all was either crowds, or solitude; the effort to seem delighted, or palpable discontent; extravagant festivity, or bitterness and frowns. My haughty father was scarcely approachable, unless when some lucky job shed a few drops of honey into his natural gall; and my gentle mother habitually took refuge in her chamber, with a feebleness of mind which only

embittered her vexations. In short, "the family fireside" had become with me a name for every thing dull and discomforting; and a *tête-à-tête* little less than an absolute terror.

But, in this apartment, I saw how perfectly possible it might be, to make one's way through life, even with so small a share of that world as the pair before me. I had now spent some hours without a care, without a wish, or even a thought, beyond the room in which we sat. My imagination had not flagged, no sense of weariness had touched me, our conversation had never wanted a topic; yet the Jew was one, certainly of no peculiar charm of manner, though a man of an original mind, and well acquainted with general life; and even his daughter was too foreign and fantastic, to realize my *beau idéal*. Still, with the one being of my choice, I felt that it would be possible to be happy, on a desert island.

Our supper was as animated as our evening. My remarks on the passing world—a world of which I then knew not much more than the astronomer does of the inhabitants of the moon, by inspecting it

> "With his glazed optic tube,
> At midnight from the top of Fesolé,
> Or in Val d'Arno, to descry new seas,
> Rivers, and mountains on her spotty globe"—

were received with an acquiescence, which showed that I had already gained some ground, even in the rough, though undoubtedly subtle and powerful, mind of the Jew: as for Mariamne, she was all delight, and until she took her leave of us for the night, all smiles.

As she closed the door, Mordecai laid his muscular hand on my shoulder. "A word with you, Mr. Marston;—you have rendered me the highest of all services, in saving that girl from a dreadful death. You have been of use to me in other matters also, unconsciously I aver—but we shall talk of that another time. Now, to come to the point at once. If you can make yourself my daughter's choice; for I shall never control her; I shall not throw any obstacles in the way. What say you?"

I never felt more difficulty in an answer. My voice actually died within my lips. I experienced a feverish sensation, which must have mounted to my face, and given me the look of a clown or a criminal, if the Jew had but looked at me: but he was waiting my reply, with his eyes fixed on the ground. Yet, the hesitation was soon over; I was almost pledged to Lafontaine, as a man of honour; I knew that Mariamne, however she might play the coquette for the day, was already bound in heart to the gallant Frenchman; and, if neither impediment had existed, there was a chain, cold as ice, but strong as adamant—a chain, of which she who had bound it was altogether ignorant, but which I had neither the power nor the will to sever. Still, it was not for me to divulge Mariamne's secret, and I could not even touch upon my own. I escaped from the dilemma under cover of another reason, and also a true one.

Thanking him for his kindness and candour, I observed, "that I was nothing, and had nothing; and, that, to offer myself to the acceptance of one

entitled to wed so opulently as his daughter, would be to pain my feelings, and place me in a humiliating point of view, in the presence of one whose respect I ought to deserve." Our conversation extended far into the night; and I freely entered into the disappointment which I had sustained in the unfortunate loss of my commission. I added, that I was determined not to lead a life of idleness, even if I had possessed the means; and that as the army was the profession which gave the fairest prospect of being known to the world, I must pursue it, if possible.

The idea was fully approved of by my energetic hearer. "Right!" said he. "It is exactly the thing which I should have expected from you. You have been ill-treated, I own; but there is no use in kicking at power, unless you can kick it before you. The machinery of government is too huge for any one of us to resist; and unless we run along with it, our only wisdom is to get out of its way. But, you shall have a commission, ay, even if it cost a thousand guineas. Never refuse; I am not in the habit of throwing away my money; but you saved Mariamne's life, and I would not have lost my child, for all the bullion in the Bank of England."

I was surprised by this burst of generosity, but it was real; and the Jew, as if to put his sincerity beyond all doubt, had torn a leaf out of his pocket-book, and was writing an order for the sum on his banker: he laid it on the table. I returned it to him at once, perhaps not less to his surprise, than his offer had been to mine. But I reminded him,

that I still had a balance at my banker's; and I told him besides, that I had made up my mind to enter the regiment from which I had been so unceremoniously dismissed, or none. He stared. "If," said I, "I shall not be commissioned in the Guards, it will be utterly beyond my power to persuade even my own relatives, much less the world, that I have not been dismissed for some act of impropriety. Or, if men will not hazard saying this to my face, they will only be more likely to say it, where I cannot defend myself."

"True!" said Mordecai, as if the opinion had cast a new light on him. "Perfectly to the point. This is a world of scandal; and, like the wolves, the whole pack fall on the wounded. You must recover your commission, or be ready to tell your story every day of your life, and be only half believed after all. Yes, you must enter that very corps, or be sneered at as long as you live; and if you have a heart to be stung, it will be stung. Our people know that well."

"I should give my last shilling to be carrying its colours at this moment," said I, "but unfortunately money is useless there. The Guards are the favourite of royalty, and their commissions naturally go to men of rank and fortune."

"Well, we must go to town and see what is to be done. When will you be ready?" asked my host.

"To-night—this moment."

"No, no, Mr. Marston, my movements cannot be quite so expeditious. I must wait for my

London letters in the morning. On their arrival we may start, and, by taking four horses, reach town, before the Horse Guards closes for the day."

At breakfast next morning Mariamne was not to be seen: she excused herself by a violent headach; and by the countenance of her Abigail, generally a tolerable reflection of the temper of the female authority of a house, it was evident that I had fallen into disfavour. But, how was this to be accounted for? Mordecai, from the lateness of the hour at which we parted, could not have seen her; even if she should condescend to take my matrimonial chilness as an offence. But the mystery was soon cleared, by her answer to the note which contained my farewell. It was simply the enclosure of a few hapless lines of verse, in which the name of Clotilde occurred, and which had been found, in the clearance of my chamber preparatory to my journey. This was decisive. Mariamne was a sovereign, who, choose as she might her prime minister, would not suffer her royal attendance to be diminished by the loss of a single slave. I petitioned for a parting word; it was declined; and I had only to regret my poetic error, or my still greater error, in not keeping my raptures under lock and key.

As the carriage drew up to the door, Mordecai casually asked me, "Have you left your card at the Steyne?"

"No," was the reply. "Was it necessary?"

"Absolutely so; a message has been sent frequently, to enquire for you during your illness, and

your leaving the neighbourhood without acknowledging the honour, would be impossible."

"Well, let us drive there at once," said I.

On reaching the prince's cottage—for cottage it then was, and nothing more—the gentleman in waiting who received my card, told me that his Royal Highness had desired, that whenever I called he should be apprized of my coming, "as he wished to hear the history of the accident from myself." The prince's fondness for hearing everything out of the common course, was well known; and I had only to obey. I had the honour of an introduction accordingly; and was received with all the customary graces of his manner, and even with what attracts still more, with kindness. He enquired into the circumstances, and was evidently taking an interest in such parts of the narrative as I chose to give, when he was interrupted by the arrival of a courier from London. The letters happened to be of importance, and must be answered immediately. "But," said he, with his irresistible smile, "I must not lose your story; we dine at seven. You will probably meet some whom you would be gratified by seeing. Adieu—remember, seven."

This was equivalent to a command; and there was no resource, but to defer my journey for twelve hours more. Mordecai, too, was not unwilling to exchange a dreary drive, in which he had no immediate concern, for the comforts of his own home; or perhaps the honour among his neighbours of having for an inmate a guest of the heir-apparent, qualified

the delay. Mariamne, at our approach, fled from the drawing-room, like a frightened doe. And at the appointed hour, I was at the pretty trellised porch of the prince's residence.

CHAPTER IX.

"Time was, ere yet in those degenerate days,
Ignoble themes obtained mistaken praise,
When sense and wit with poetry allied;
No fabled graces, flourished, side by side,
From the same fount their inspiration drew,
And, reared by taste, bloom'd fairer, as they grew."

BYRON.

WHAT that residence and Brighton have since become, is familiar to the world—the one an oriental palace, and the other a seaside London. But at this time the surrounding landscape almost looked, as it had been seen by our forefathers the Picts. I found the prince standing, with four or five gentlemen of distinguished appearance, under the veranda which shaded the front of the cottage from the evening sun. The day had been one of that sultry temperature in which autumn sometimes takes its leave of us, and the breeze from the sea was now delightfully refreshing. The flowers, clustered in thick knots over the little lawn, were raising their languid heads, and breathing their renewed fragrance. All was sweetness and calm. The sunlight, falling on the amphitheatre of

hills, and touching them with varieties of colour, as it fell on their heights and hollows, gave the whole a glittering and fantastic aspect; while the fragrance, the stillness, and the absence of all look of life, except an occasional curl of smoke from some of the scattered cottages along the beach; with the magnificent expanse of the ocean bounding all, smooth and blue as a floor of lapis-lazuli; completed the character of a scene, which might have lain in fairy-land.

The prince, whose politeness was undeviating to all, came forward to meet me at once, introduced me to his circle, and entered into conversation; the topic was his beautiful little dwelling.

"You see, Mr. Marston," said he, "we live here like hermits, and in not much more space. I give myself credit, for having made the discovery of this spot. I dare say, the name of Brighthelmstone may have been in the journal of some voyager to unknown lands, but I believe I have the honour of being the first who ever made it known in London."

I fully acknowledged the taste of his discovery.

"Why," said he, "it certainly is not the taste of Kew, whose chief prospect is a chaos of chimneys, and whose chief zephyrs are the breath of brew-houses and limekilns.—Hampton Court has always reminded me of a monastery, which I should never dream of inhabiting, unless I put on the gown of a monk—St. James's still looks the hospital that it once was. Windsor is a noble structure—Edward's mile of palaces—but that residence is better tenanted

than by a subject; while, here, I have a desert, it is true; but, as the poet says, or sings—

'I am monarch of all I survey.'"

"Yes," I observed. "But still a desert highly picturesque, and strikingly capable of cultivation."

"I hope not," he answered laughingly. "The first appearance of cultivation would put me to flight at once. Fortunately, its cultivation is, I believe, quite impossible. The soil almost totally prohibits tillage, the sea air prohibits trees, the shore prohibits trade, nothing can live here but a fisherman, or a shrimp; and thus I am secure against the invasion of all *improvers*. W——, come here, and assist me to cure Mr. Marston of his scepticism, as to the absolute impossibility of our ever being surrounded by brick and mortar."

A man of a remarkably graceful air bowed to the call, and came towards us.

"W——," said the prince, "comfort me, by saying that no man can be citizenized, in this corner of the world."

"I admit it to be highly improbable," was the answer. "And yet, when we know John Bull's variety of tastes, and his heroic contempt of money, in indulging them, such things may be. I lately found one of my country constituents the inhabitant of a very pretty villa—which he had built, too, for himself—in Sicily; and of all places, in the Val di Noto, the most notorious spot in the island, or perhaps on the earth, for all orders of desperadoes—the very haunt of Italian smugglers, refugee Catalonians, and African rene-

gades, the whole set expert beyond all living knaves in piracy. Yet, there sat my honest and fat-cheeked friend, with Ætna roaring above him; declaiming on liberty and property, as comfortably as if he could not be shot for the tenth of a sixpence; and talking of the future, with as much security, as if he could not be swept off, chattels and all, at the nod of an Algerine. All is chance. If the whim takes the Londoner, you will have him down here without mercy. To the three per cents nothing is impossible."

"Well, well," said the good humoured prince, "that cannot happen for another hundred years; and in the mean time my prospect will never be shut out. Let them build, or pull down, pyramids, if they will. The noise of city life will never fill those fields; the smoke of an insurrection of city hovels will never mingle with the freshness of such an evening as this. Here, at all events, I have spent half a dozen of the pleasantest years of my existence, and here, if I should live so long, I might spend the next fifty, notwithstanding your prophecies, W——, as far from London, except in the mere matter of miles, as if I had fixed myself in a valley of the Crimea."

His royal highness was clever, but he was no prophet, more than other men. Need I say, that London found him out, within the tenth part of his fifty years; instead of suffering him to escape, compelled him to build: and, after the outlay of a quarter of a million, shut him up within his own walls, like the giant of the Arabian tales in a bottle—metamorphosing his village into a huge suburb of the huge metropolis; besieging his lawn by a circumvallation

of taverns and toy-shops: the sea invisible; and the landscape scattered over with prettiness of architecture created by the wealth of Cheapside.

But, simple as was the exterior of the cottage, all within was costliness, so far as it can be united with elegance. Later days somewhat impaired the taste of this accomplished man, and he sought in splendour what was only to be found in grace. But here, every decoration, from the ceiling to the floor, exhibited the simplicity of refinement. A few busts of his public friends, a few statues of the patriots of antiquity, and a few pictures of the great political geniuses of Europe—among which the broad forehead and powerful eye of Machiavel were conspicuous—showed at a glance that we were under the roof of a political personage. Even the figures in chased silver on the table were characteristic of this taste. A Timoleon, a Brutus, and a Themistocles, incomparably classic, stood on the plateau; a rapier which had belonged to Doria, and a sabre which had been worn by Castruccio, hung on either side of the mantelpiece. The whole had a republican tendency, but it was republicanism in gold and silver—mother-of-pearl republicanism—the Whig principle enbalmed in Cellini chalices and porcelain of Frederic the Great. Fortunately, the conversation did not turn upon home politics. It wandered lightly through all the pleasanter topics of the day; slight ventilations of public character, dexterous allusions to anecdotes which none but the initiated could understand; and the general easy intercourse of well-bred men, who met under the roof of another well-bred man to

spend a few hours as agreeably as they could. The prince took his full share in the gaiety of the evening; and I was surprised to find at once so remarkable a familiarity with the classics, whose sound was scarcely out of my college ears; and with those habits of the humbler ranks, which could have so seldom come to his personal knowledge. To his exterior, nature had been singularly favourable. His figure, though full, still retained all the activity and ease of youth; his features, though by no means regular, had a general look of manly beauty; and his smile was cordiality itself. I have often since heard him praised for supreme elegance; but his manner was rather that of a man of great natural good-humour, who yet felt his own place in society, and who, in those days, possessed the intelligence which qualified him to enjoy the talents of others, without suffering from a sense of inferiority. Among those at table were C—— and H——, names well known in the circles of Devonshire House; Sir P—— F——, who struck me at first sight by his penetrating physiognomy, and who was even then suspected of being the author of that most brilliant of libels, Junius; and W———, then in the flower of life, and whose subtilty and whim might be seen in his fine forehead and volatile eyes. I was peculiarly struck with one personage, of low stature, but of singularly animated features. He was evidently a military man, and of the Sister Isle; a prime favourite with the prince and every body; and, I think, a secretary in the prince's household. He had just returned from Paris; and, as French news was then the universal topic, he took an ample share in the

conversation. The name of La Fayette happened to be mentioned, as then carrying every thing before it in France—

"I doubt his talents," said the prince.

"I more doubt his sincerity," said W———.

"I still more doubt whether this day three months he will have his head on his shoulders," said Sir P——.

"None can doubt his present popularity; and what is all popularity, beyond the present hour?" said the secretary.

"At all events," said his royal highness, "I cannot doubt that he has wit, which in France was always something, and now, in the general crush of pedigree, is the only thing. Any man who could furnish the Parisians with a *bon-mot* a-day, would have a strong chance of succeeding to the throne on the first vacancy."

"A case has just occurred in point," said the secretary. "Last week La Fayette had a quarrel with a battalion of the National Guard, on the subject of drill; they considering the manual exercise as an infringement of the Rights of Man. The general being of the contrary opinion, a deputation of corporals; for any thing higher would have looked too aristocratic; waited on him at his head-quarters in the Place Vendôme, to demand——his immediate resignation. On further inquiry, he ascertained that all the battalions, amounting to thirty thousand men, were precisely of the same sentiments. The next morning happened to have been appointed for a general review of the National Guard. La Fayette appeared

on the ground as commandant, at the head of his staff, and after a gallop along the line, suddenly alighted from his horse, and taking a musket on his shoulder, to the utter astonishment of everybody, walked directly into the centre of the line, and took post in the ranks. Of course, all the field-officers flew up to learn the reason. 'Gentlemen,' said he, 'I am tired of receiving orders, as commander-in-chief, and that I may *give* them, I have become a *private*, as you see.' The sarcasm was received with a shout of merriment; and, as in France a pleasantry would privilege a man to set fire to a church; the general was cheered on all sides, was remounted, and the citizen army, suspending the 'Rights of Man' for the day; proceeded to march and manœuvre according to the drill framed by despots and kings."

"Well done, La Fayette," said the prince, "I did not think that there was so much in him. To be sure, to have one's neck in danger—for the next step to deposing would probably be to hang him—might sharpen a man's wits a good deal."

"Yet," said Sir P——, "so many live by their wits in Paris, that even the marquis of the mob might have his chance; but a *bon-mot* actually saved, within these few days, one even so obnoxious as a bishop, from being *sus. per coll.* In the general system of purifying the church by hanging the priests, the rabble of the Palais Royal seized the Bishop of Autun, and were proceeding to treat him '*à la lanterne*' as an aristocrat. It must be owned that the lamps in Paris, swinging as they do, across the streets, offer a very striking suggestion for a final

lesson in politics. It was night, and the lamp was trimmed. They were already letting it down for the bishop to be its successor; when he observed, with the coolness of a spectator—'Gentlemen, if I am to take the place of that lamp, it does not strike me, that the street will be the better lighted.' The whimsicality of the idea caught them at once; a bishop for a *réverbère* was a new idea; they roared with laughter at the conception, and finished by bidding him go home, for a '*bon enfant!*'"

"I cannot equal the La Fayette story," said C———, "but I remember one not unlike it, when the Duke of Rutland was the Irish viceroy. Charlemont was reviewing a brigade of his volunteers, when he found a sudden stop in the movements; a troop of cavalry on a flank choosing to exhibit a will of their own, in an extraordinary way. If the brigade advanced, they halted; if it halted, they advanced. The captain bawled in vain. Aide-de-camp after aide-de-camp was sent to inquire the cause; they all came back roaring with laughter. At length Charlemont, irritated by the ridicule of the display, rode down the line, and desired the captain to order them to move; not a man stirred; they were all as immovable as a wall of brass. He then took the affair upon himself; and angrily asked, 'if they meant to insult him.' 'Not a bit of it, my lord,' cried out all the Paddies together. 'But the corps is not on *speaking terms* with the captain.'"

"How perfectly I can see Charlemont's countenance at that capital answer," said the prince: his fastidious look turning into a laugh, and the real

dignity of the man forced to give way to his national sense of ridicule. "D——, is there any hope of his coming over this season?"

"Not much. He talks in his letters, of England, as a man married to a termagant, might talk of his first love—hopeless regrets, inevitable destiny, and so forth. He is bound to Ireland, and she treats him as Catharine treated Petruchio before marriage. But, he has not the whip of Petruchio, nor perhaps the will, since the knot has been tied. He is only one of the many accomplished Irishmen who have done just the same thing—who find some strange spell in the confusions of a country full of calamities; prefer clouds to sunshine; and complain of their choice all their lives."

"Yes," said W———. "It is like the attempt to put a coat and trousers on the American Indian. The hero flings them off, on the first opportunity, takes to his plumes and painted skin, and prefers being tomahawked in a swamp, to dying in a feather-bed like a gentleman!"

"Or," said the prince, "as Goldsmith so admirably expresses it of the Swiss—to whom, however, it is much less applicable than to his own countrymen—

> "And as the babe, whom rising storms molest,
> Clings but the closer to his mother's breast,
> So the rude whirlwind and the tempest's roar
> But bind him to his native mountains more.'"

My story next came upon the *tapis;* and the sketch of my capture by the free-traders, was listened to with polite interest.

"Very possibly I may have some irregular neigh-

bours," was the prince's remark. "But, it must be confessed, that I am the intruder on their domain, not they on mine; and, if I were plundered, perhaps I should have not much more right to complain, than a whale-catcher has of being swamped by a blow of the tail, or a man fond of law being forced to pay a bill of costs."

"On the contrary," said the secretary, "I give them no slight credit for their forbearance; for the sacking of this cottage would, probably, be not more difficult than beating off a revenue cruiser, and the value of their prize would be worth many a successful run. I make it a point never to go to war with the multitude. I had a little lesson on the subject myself, within the week, in Paris"——

An attendant now brought in a letter for the prince, which stopped the narrative. The prince honoured the letter with a smile.

"It is from H——— House," said he,—"a very charming woman the Duchess; just enough of the woman to reconcile us to the wit, and just enough of the wit to give poignancy to the woman. She laughingly says, she is growing 'heartless, harmless, and old.' What a pity that so fine a creature should grow any of the three!"

"There is no great fear of that," observed Sir P——, "if it is to be left to her Grace's own decision. On no question in the world, is a fine woman more deliberate in coming to a conclusion."

"Well, well," said the prince; "*she*, at least, is privileged. Diamonds never grow old."

"They may require a little resetting now and then, however," said I.

"Yes, perhaps; but it is only once in a hundred years. If they sparkle during one generation, what can *we* ask more? Her Grace tells me an excellent hit—the last flash of my old friend Selwyn. It happens that Lady ——"—another fine woman was mentioned—"has looked rather distantly upon her former associates, since her husband was created a marquis. 'I enquired the other day,' says the duchess, 'for a particular friend of hers, the wife of an earl.' 'I have not seen her for a long time,' was the answer. Selwyn whispered at the moment, 'I dare say, not since the *creation*.'"

"If Selwyn," said Sir P——, "had not made such a *trade* of wit; if he had not been such a palpable machine for grinding everything into *bons-mots;* if his distillation of the dross of common talk into the spirit of pleasantry were less tardy and less palpable; I should have allowed him to be"——

"What?" asked some one from the end of the table.

"Less a *bore than he was*," was the succinct answer.

"For my part," said the prince, "I think that old George *was* amusing to the last. He had great observation of the oddities of character, and, you will admit, that he had no slight opportunities; for he was a member of, I believe, every club, for five miles round St. James's. But he *was* slow. Wit should be like a pistol-shot; a flash and a hit, and

both best when they come closest together. Still, he was a fragment of an age gone by, and I prize him, as I should a piece of pottery from Herculaneum; its use past away, but its colours not extinguished; and, though altogether valueless to our age, curious, as the *beau reste* of a pipkin of antiquity."

"Sheridan," observed C———, "amounts, in my idea, to a perfect wit; at once keen and polished; with nothing of either violence or virulence—nothing of the sabre or the saw; his weapon is the stiletto, fine as a needle, yet it strikes home."

"*Apropos*," said the prince, "does any one know, whether there is to be a debate this evening? He was to have dined here. What can have happened to him?"

"What always happens to him," said one of the party; "he has postponed it. Ask Sheridan this week, for Saturday at seven, and you will have him next week on Sunday, at eight. 'Procrastination is the thief of time,' to him more than, I suppose, to any other man living."

"At all events," said H——, "it is the only thief that Sheridan has to fear. His present condition defies all the skill of larceny. He is completely in the position of Horace's traveller—he might sing in a forest of felons."

At this moment a post-chaise was heard rushing up the avenue, and Sheridan soon made his appearance. He was received by the prince with evident gladness, and, by all the table with congratulations "on his having arrived at all." He was abundant

in apologies; among the rest, "his carriage had broken down half way"—"he had been compelled to spend the morning with Charles Fox"—"he had been subpœnaed on the trial of the Scottish conspirators"—"he had been summoned on the committee of a contested election"—"he had been at a marriage." The prince smiled sceptically enough at this succession of causes, to produce the single effect of being an hour behind-hand.

"The prince bows at every new excuse," said H—— at my side, "as Boileau took off his hat at every plagiarism in his friend's comedy—on the score of old acquaintance. If one word of all this is true, it may be the breaking down of his post-chaise; and even that he probably broke down for the sake of the excuse. Sheridan could not walk from the door to the dinner-table without an exhibition of his sportive ingenuity."

I had now, for the first time, an opportunity of seeing this remarkable man. He was then in the prime of his life, of his fame, and of his powers. His countenance struck me, at a glance, as the most characteristic that I had ever seen. Fancy may do much, but I thought that I could discover in his physiognomy every quality for which he was distinguished: the pleasantry of the man of the world, the keen observation of the great dramatist; the vividness and daring of the brilliant orator. His features were somewhat exaggerated, but their combination was so powerfully intellectual, that, at the moment when he turned his face towards you, you felt that you were looking on a man of the highest order of faculties.

None of the leading men of his day had a physiognomy so palpably mental. Burke's spectacled eyes told but little; Fox, with the grand outlines of a Greek sage, had no mobility of feature; Pitt was evidently no favourite of whatever goddess presides over beauty at our birth. But Sheridan's countenance was the actual mirror of one of the most glowing, versatile, and vivid minds in the world. His eyes alone would have given expression to a face of clay. I never saw in human head orbs so large, of so intense a black, and of such sparkling lustre. His manners, too, were then admirable; easy without negligence, and respectful, as they ought to be in the guest at a royal table; yet without a shadow of servility. He was also wholly free from that affectation of saying good things, which naturally tempts a man, who cannot help knowing, that his good things are recorded. He laughed, and listened, and rambled through the common topics of the day, with all the evidence of one enjoying the moment, and glad to contribute to its enjoyment. And yet, in all this ease, I could see that remoter thoughts, from time to time, passed through his mind. In the midst of our gaiety, the contraction of his deep and noble brows showed, that he was wandering far away from the slight topics of the table; and I could imagine what he might be, when struggling against the gigantic strength of Pitt, or thundering against Indian tyranny before the Peerage in Westminster Hall.

I saw him long afterwards; when the promise of his day was overcast; when the flashes of his genius were like guns of distress; and when his character,

talents, and frame were alike sinking. But, ruined as he was, and humiliated by folly as much as by misfortune, I have never been able to regard Sheridan but as a fallen star—a star, too, of the first magnitude; without a superior in the whole galaxy from which he fell, and with an original brilliancy perhaps more lustrous than them all.

"Well, Sheridan, what news have you brought with you?" asked the prince.

The answer was a laugh. "Nothing, but that Downing Street has turned into a suburb of Parnassus. The astounding fact is, that G—— has teemed, and, as the fruits of the long vacation, has produced a Latin epigram:

> Veris risit Amor rosas caducas:
> Cui Ver—'Vane puer, tuine flores,
> Quæso, perpetuum manent in ævum?'"

The prince laughed. "He writes on the principle, of course, that in one's dotage we are privileged to return to the triflings of our infancy; and that Downing Street cannot be better employed in these days, than as a chapel of ease to Eton."

"Yet, even there, he is but a translator," said Sir P——.

> "'The tenth transmitter of an idler's line,'

It is merely a *rechauffé* of the old Italian.

> Amor volea schernir la primavera
> Sulla breve durata e passegiera
> Dei vaghi fiori suoi.
> Ma la bella stagione a lui rispose,
> 'Forse i piacere tuoi
> Vita più lunga avran delle mie rose.'"

The prince, who, under Cyril Jackson, had acquired no trivial scholarship, now alluded to a singular poetic production, *printed*, as he remarked, in 1618, which seemed distinctly to announce the French Revolution.

> "Festinat propere cursu jam temporis ordo,
> Quo locus, et Franci majestas prisca, senatus,
> Papa, sacerdotes, missæ, simulacra, Deique
> Fictitii, atque omnis superos exosa potestas,
> Judicio Domini justo sublata peribunt*."

"The production is certainly curious," remarked W———; "but poets always had something of the fortune-teller; and it is striking, that in many of the Middle-Age Italian Latinists you will find more instances of strong declamation against Rome, and against France as its chief supporter, than perhaps in any other authorship of Europe. Audacity was the result of terror. All Italy reminds one of the papal palace at Avignon — the banqueting-rooms above, the dungeons of the Inquisition below; popes and princes feasting, within sound of the rack and scourge. The Revolution is but the ripening of the disease; the hydrophobia, which has been coldly lurking in the system, for centuries."

"Why, then," said Sheridan, abruptly, as if awak-

---

* The time is rushing on
When France shall be undone;
And like a dream shall pass,
Pope, monarch, priest and mass;
When vengeance shall be just,
And all her shrines be dust,
And wrath shall dig the grave
Of sovereign and of slave.

ing from a reverie, "shall we all wonder, at what all expected? France is running mad, without waiting for the moon; mad in broad day; stripping off, not merely the royal livery, which she wore for the last five hundred years with so much the look of a well-bred footman; but tearing away the last coverture of the national nakedness. Well, then, in a week or two of this process, she will have got rid not only of church and king, but of laws, property, and freedom. But, what business have we to interfere? If she is madder than the maddest of March hares, she is only the less dangerous; her fever will be followed by exhaustion, or she will probably dash out her brains against the first wall that she cannot spring over."

"But, at least, we know that mischief is already done among ourselves. Those French affairs are dividing our strength in the House," remarked C——.

"What then?" quickly demanded Sheridan. "What is it to me, if others have the nightmare, while I feel my eyes open? Burke, in his dreams, may dread the example of France; but I as little dread it, as I should a conflagration at the Pole. He supposes Englishmen to have such a passion for foreign importations, that if the pestilence were raging on the other side of the Channel, we should send over for samples of the *virus*, and require Acts of Parliament to prevent us from inoculating ourselves. My proposition is, that the example of France is more likely to make slaves of us, than republicans."

"To make us," said W—— with a smile,

'Fly from minor tyrants to the throne?'"

"I laugh at the whole," replied Sheridan, "as a bugbear. I have no fear of France as either a schoolmaster, or a seducer, of England. France is lunatic, and who dreads a lunatic, after his first paroxysm? Disgust, decay, perhaps death, are the natural results. If there is any peril for us, it is only from our meddling. The lunatic never revenges himself, but on his keeper. I should leave the patient to the native doctors, or to those best of all doctors for mad nations, suffering, shame, and time. Proceed to chain, taunt, or torment the lunatic; and he rewards the rashness of your regimen by knocking out your brains."

"Those are not exactly the opinions of our friend Charles," observed the prince, with peculiar emphasis.

"No," was the reply. "But, I ask no man to think for me. I think for myself. Some would take the madman by the hand, and treat him, as if in possession of his senses. Perhaps I may not trust him so far. Burke would gather all the dignitaries of Church and State, and would treat him as a demoniac; attempt to exorcise the evil spirit, and if it continued intractable, solemnly excommunicate the possessed, by bell, book, and candle. But, as I do not like throwing away my trouble, *I* should let him alone."

"The doctrine of confiscation is startling to all property," remarked the prince. "I wish Charles would remember, that his strength lies in the aristocracy."

"No man knows it better," observed W——. "Yet, I strongly doubt, whether the consciousness of his own extraordinary talents is not at this moment

tempting him into hazard. The multitude are a new element to him, and to all. I can conceive a man of pre-eminent ability, as much delighted with difficulty, as inferior men are delighted with ease. Fox has managed the aristocracy so long, and has bridled them with so much the hand of a master, that what he might have once considered as an achievement, he now regards as child's play."

All listened: and expressive glances passed round the table. The speaker observed them, and resumed; but in a still firmer tone.

"If Alexander's taming Bucephalus was a triumph for a noble boy, I scarcely think that, after passing the Granicus, he would have been proud of his fame as a horse-breaker. Fox sees, as all men see, that great changes, for either good or ill, are coming on the world. Next to that of a great king, perhaps the most tempting prospect to ambition, would be the supremacy of a great demagogue."

The glitter of Sheridan's eye, and the glow which passed across his cheek, as he looked at the speaker; showed how fully he agreed with the conception; and I expected some bold burst of opinion. But, with that sudden change of tone and temper, which was among the most curious characteristics of the man, he laughingly said, "At all events, whatever the Revolution may do for our neighbours, it will do a vast deal of good to ourselves. The clubs were growing so dull, that I began to think of withdrawing my name from them all. Their principal supporters were daily yawning themselves to death. The wiser part were flying into the country, where, at least, their

yawning would not be visible; and the rest remained enveloped in dry newspapers, like the herbs of a 'Hortus siccus.'—White's was an hospital of the deaf and dumb; and Brookes's strongly resembled Westminster Hall in the long vacation. It was in the midst of this general doze that the news from Paris came. The effects were miraculous—the universal spasm of locked jaw was no more. Men no longer regarded each other with a despairing glance in St. James's Street, and passed on. All was sudden sociability. Even in the city, people grew communicative, and puns were committed, that would have struck their forefathers with amazement. As Burke said, in one of his sybilline speeches the other night: 'The tempest had come, at once bending down the summits of the forest, and stirring up the depths of the lake.' But, one of the aldermen, on being told that the French were preparing to pass the Waal, said, "that if the Dutch would take *his* advice, and if iron spikes were not enough, they would *glass* their *wall*."

The newspapers now arrived, and France, for a while, engrossed the conversation. The famous Mirabeau had just made an oration, with which all France was ringing.

"That man's character," said the prince, after reading some vehement portions of his speech, "perplexes me more and more. An aristocrat by birth, he is a democrat by passion; but he has palpably come into the world too early, or too late, for power. —Under Louis XIV., he would have made a magnificent minister; under his successor, a splendid

courtier; but under the present unfortunate king, he must be either the brawler or the buffoon, the incendiary, or the sport, of the multitude. Yet he is evidently a man of singular mind, and if he knows how to manage his popularity, he may yet do great things."

"I always," said Sheridan, "am inclined to predict well of the man, who takes advantage of his time. That is the true faculty for public life; the world has no surer test of the capacity formed to command it.—There are thousands who have ability, for one who knows how to make use of it; as we are told, that there are vast quadrupeds, in the depths of the ocean, which never come up to the light. But I prefer your leviathan, which, whether he slumbers in the calm or rushes through the storm, shows all his magnitude to the eye."

"And gets himself harpooned for his pains," observed W———.

"Well, then, at least he dies the death of a hero," was the reply—"'tempesting the brine,'—and perhaps even sinking the harpooner." He uttered this sentiment with such sudden ardour, that all listened while he declaimed—"I can imagine no worse fate for a man of public ability, than to linger down into the grave; to find the world disappearing from him, even while he remains in it; to feel his political vision growing indistinct, his political ear losing the voice of man, his public passions growing stagnant, all his sensibilities palpably paralyzing, while the world is as loud, busy, and brilliant round him as ever—with but one sense remaining, the unhappy consciousness that,

though not *yet* dead, he is buried; that he exists a figure, if not of scorn, of pity; entombed under the compassionate gaze of mankind, and forgotten before he has mouldered into the grave.—If *I* am to die, let me die in hot blood; let me die, like the lion, biting the spear that has entered his heart, or springing upon the antagonist who has given the blow—not like the crushed snake, miserable and mutilated, hiding itself in its hole, and torpid, before it is turned into clay!"

"Will Mirabeau redeem France?" asked the prince; "or will he overwhelm the throne? that is the great question."

"I never heard of any one but Saint Christopher," said Sheridan, with sudden sportiveness, "who could walk through the ocean, and yet keep his head above water.—I fear that Mirabeau is out of soundings already."

"Burke," said F——, "predicts that he must perish; that the Revolution will go on, increasing in its terrors; and that it would be as easy to stop a planet launched through space, as the progress of France to ruin."

"So be it," said Sheridan, with a grave change of tone and aspect, "if it is the law of things. I have no love for winter, but, without it, we should have neither spring, summer, nor autumn. I fear no revolutions here; for here we have no pressure to shake off, worth the hazard of life. Man rises only against the pressures laid on him by man: he never wars against fortune, circumstance, and the nature of things. He knows, that if he fights with the air, his force evapo-

rates.—His assault is as weak as his antagonist is impassive."

"But revolutions,"—interrupted some one.

"What's in a name?" retorted Sheridan. "They belong to the land of Bastilles. They can have no ground for the sole of their feet, in a country of Laws. They may wreck a despotism now and then; but, like tempests, they prevent the ocean from being a pond, and the air from being a pestilence. I am content, if the world is the better for all this, though France may be the worse. I am a political optimist, in spite of Voltaire; or, I agree with a better man and a greater poet—'All's well that ends well.'"

The prince looked grave; and significantly asked, "Whether too high a present price might not be paid for prospective good?"

Sheridan turned off the question with a smile. "The man who has as little to pay as I have," said he, "may seldom think of price, one way or the other. Possibly, if I were his Grace of B——, or my Lord F——, I might begin to balance my rent-roll against my raptures. Or, if I were higher still, I might be only more prudent. But," said he, with a bow, "if what was fit for Parmenio was not fit for Alexander, neither would what was fit for Alexander be fit for Parmenio."

The prince soon after rose from table, and led the way into the library; where we spent some time in looking over an exquisite collection of drawings of Greece and Albania, a present from the Prussian king to his royal highness. The windows were thrown

open, and the fresh scents of the flower garden were sweet and soothing, the night was calm, and the moon gleamed far over the quiet ocean.

At this moment, a soft sound of music arose at a distance. I looked in vain for the musicians; none were visible. The strain, tastefully managed, now approached, now receded, now seemed to ascend from the sea, now to stoop from the sky. All crowded to the casement—to me, a stranger and unexpecting, all was surprise and pleasure. I, almost unconsciously, repeated the fine lines in the Tempest:—

> " Where should this music be? I' the air or the earth?
> It sounds no more: and sure, it waits upon
> Some god of the island—
> This music crept by me upon the waters,
> Allaying both their fury and my passion
> With its sweet air—But 'tis gone!
> No, it begins again."

The prince returned my quotation with a gracious smile, and the words of the great poet,

> " This is no mortal business, nor no sound
> This the earth owns."

His private band, stationed in one of the thickets, had been the magicians. Supper was laid in this handsome apartment, not precisely

> " The spare Sabine feast,
> A radish and an egg,"

but perfectly simple, and perfectly elegant. The service was Sevres, and I observed on it the arms of the Duke of Orleans, combined with those of the prince. It had been a present from the most luxurious, and

most unfortunate, man on earth. And thus closed my first day in the "exclusive world."

On the next evening, I had exchanged fresh breezes and bright skies for the sullen atmosphere and perpetual smoke of the great city; stars for lamps, and the gentle murmurs of the tide, for the turbid rush and heavy roar of the million of London. During the journey, I had been abandoned sufficiently to my own meditations; for Mariamne had remained steadily, and, I feared, angrily, invisible. Mordecai consulted nothing but his tablets, and was evidently plunged in some huge financial speculation. He dropped me at a hotel in St. James's, and hurried towards his den in the depths of the city, like a bat to its cave.

But, an English hotel is a cure for most of the sorrows of English life. The well-served table—the excellent sherry—a blazing fire, not at all unrequired in the first sharp evenings of autumn—and the newspaper "just come in," are capital "medicines for the mind diseased." And like old Marechal Louvois, who recommended roast pigeons as a cure for grief—observing that, "whenever he heard of the loss of any of his friends, he ordered a pair, and found himself always much comforted after eating them"—I was beginning to sink into that easy oblivion of the rubs of life, which, without actual sleep, has all the placid enjoyment of slumber; when a voice pronounced my name, and I was startled and half suffocated by the embrace of a figure, who rushed from an opposite box, and, in a torrent of French, poured out a torrent of raptures on my arriving in London.

When I contrived at last to disengage myself, I

saw Lafontaine; but so hollow-cheeked and pale-visaged, that I could scarcely recognize my showy friend, in the skeleton knight who stood gesticulating his happiness before me.

At length he drew, with a trembling touch and a glistening eye, from his bosom a letter, which he placed in my hand with a squeeze of eternal friendship. "Read," said he, "read, and then wonder, if you can, at my misery, and my gratitude." The letter was from Mariamne, and certainly a very pretty one —gay and tender at once; gracefully alluding to some little fretfulness on her part, or his, I could scarcely tell which; but assuring him that all this was at an end—that she forswore the world henceforth, and was quite his own. All this was expressed with an elegance which I was not quite prepared to find in the fair one, and with a tone of sincerity for which I was still less prepared; yet with the coquette in every line.

I should have been glad to see him at any time, but now I received him as a resource from solitude, or rather from those restless thoughts which made solitude painful. Another bottle, perhaps, made me more sensitive, and him more willing to communicate; and before it was finished, he had opened his whole heart, and emptied his letter-case; and I had consulted him on the *im*probabilities of my ever being able to succeed in the passion, which had so strangely, yet so totally, occupied all my feelings.

It was clear, from her correspondence, that his pretty Jewess had played him, much as the angler plays the trout which he has secured on his hook.

She evidently enjoyed the display of her skill in tormenting: every second letter was almost a declaration of breaking off the correspondence altogether; or, what was even worse, there were passing references to my opinions, and quotations of my chance remarks, which, rather to my surprise, showed me that the proverb, "*Les absens ont toujours tort*," was true in more senses than one, and that the Frenchman occasionally lost ground, by being fifty miles off. Once or twice, it seemed to me, that the little "betrothed" was evidently thinking of the error of precipitate vows, and was beginning to change her mind. But her last letter was a complete extinguisher of all my vanity, if it had ever been awakened. It was a curious mingling of poignancy and penitence; an acknowledgment of the pain, which she felt in ever having given pain; and almost an entreaty, that he would finish his affairs in London, and return to Brighton, to "guard her against herself, once and for ever."

All this was quite as it should be; but the envelope contained an enormous postscript, of which I happened to be the theme. It was evidently written in another mood of mind; and, except that passion is blind, and even refuses to see, when it might; I should probably have had another rencontre with the best swordsman in the *Chevaux Légers*. After speaking of me and my prospects in life, with an interest which reached at least to the full amount of friendship; the subject of my reveries came on the tapis. "My father and Mr. Marston are on the point of going to town," said the postscript; 'the latter to dream of Mademoiselle

De Tourville, without the smallest hope of ever obtaining her hand. But I scarcely know what to think of him and his feelings—if feelings they can be called—which change like the fashions of the day, and are at the mercy of all the triflers of the day; or like the bird fluttering round the garden, merely to show that it can flutter. This habit must make him for ever incapable of that generous devotedness of heart and truth of affection, which I so much value in my '*friend.*'" But here Lafontaine interfered, obviously through fear of my plunging into some discovery of my own demerits, which had not struck him on his first perusal; and I surrendered the letter, postscript and all, having first ascertained by a glance—that the former was dated at the very hour of her discovery of my unlucky stanzas to Clotilde, and the latter probably after the "fair penitent" had time to reflect on the matter, and let compassion make its way. Woman is a brilliant problem—yet, a problem after all.

CHAPTER X.

——— "He
Hath borne his faculties so meek, hath been
So clear in his great office, that his virtues
Will plead like angels, trumpet-tongued, against
The deep damnation of his taking off;
And pity, like a naked new-born babe,
Striding the blast; or Heaven's cherubim, horsed
Upon the sightless couriers of the air,
Shall blow the horrid deed in every ear,
That tears shall drown the wind."

SHAKSPEARE.

THE trampling of cavalry and the sound of carriages prevented my attempting the solution—at least for that sitting. All the guests crowded to the door. "His Majesty was going to Drury-lane!" It was a performance "by command." The never-failing pulse in the foreign heart was touched. Lafontaine crushed his correspondence into his bosom, sprang up from table, wiped his eyes of all their sorrows, and proposed that we should see the display. I was rejoiced to escape a topic, too delicate for my handling. A coach was sent for, and by a double fee we contrived, through many a hazard, in the narrowest and most dangerous defiles of any

Christian city, to reach the stately entrance; just as the troopers were brushing away the mob from the steps, and the trumpets were outringing the cries of the orangewomen.

By another bribe, we contrived to make our way into a box, whose doors were more unrelenting than brass or marble to the crowd in the lobby; and I had my first view of national loyalty, in the handsomest theatre which I have ever seen. How often it has been burnt down, or built, since, is beyond my calculation. It was then perfection.

We had galloped to some purpose; for we had distanced the monarch and his eight carriages. The royal party had not yet entered the house; and I enjoyed, for a few minutes, one of the most striking displays that the opulence and animation of a great country can produce—the *coup-d'œil* of a well-dressed audience, in a fine and spacious theatre. Multitudes spread over hill and dale may be picturesque; the aspect of great public meetings may be startling, stern, or powerfully impressive; the British House of Lords, on the opening of the session, exhibits a majestic spectacle; but, for a concentration of all the effects of art, beauty, and magnificence, I have seen nothing like one of the English theatres, in their better days. To compare it in point of importance with any other great assemblage, would in general be idle. But at this time, even the assemblage before me, collected as it was for indulgence, had a character of remarkable interest. The times were anxious. The nation was avowedly on the eve of a struggle of which no human foresight could discover

the termination. The presence of the king was the presence of the monarchy; the presence of the assemblage was the presence of the nation; the house was only a levee on a larger scale; and the crowd, composed as it was of the most distinguished individuals of the country—the ministers, the peerage, the heads of the legislature—the whole completed by an immense mass of the middle order; gave a striking and admirable representation of the power and feelings of the empire.

At length the sound of the trumpets was heard, the door of the royal box was thrown open, and "God save the King" began. Noble as is this first of national songs, it had, at that period, a still higher meaning. It is impossible now, to express the spirit and ardour with which it was received; nay, the almost sacred enthusiasm, with which it was joined by all, and by which every sentiment was followed with boundless acclamation. It was more than an honourable and rejoicing welcome of a popular king. It was a national pledge to the throne—a proud declaration of public principle—a triumphant defiance of the enemy and the Earth, in the attempt to shake the stability of a British throne, or subdue the hearts of a British people.

The king advanced to the front of the box, and bowed, in return to the general plaudits. It was the first time that I had seen George the Third, and I was equally struck with the stateliness of his figure, and the kindliness of his countenance. Combined, they perfectly realized all that I had conceived of a monarch, to whose steadiness of determination, and

sincerity of good-will, the empire had been already indebted in periods of dangerous faction and foreign hostility; and to whom it was to be indebted still more in coming periods of still wilder faction, and of a hostility which brought the world in arms against his crown.

But, as I glanced around for a moment, to see the effect on the house, which was thundering with applause; I observed a slight confusion, like a personal quarrel, in the pit; and at the next instant saw a hand raised above the crowd, and a pistol fired in the direction of the royal box. The King started back a pace or two; and the general apprehension that he had been struck, produced a loud cry of horror. He evidently understood the public feeling, and instantly coming forward, by a bow, and with his hand on his heart, assured them of his gratitude and his safety. This bold and graceful act was acknowledged by a shout of universal congratulation; and many a bright eye, and many a manly one, too, streamed with tears. In the midst of all, the Queen and the royal family rushed into the box, flung themselves round the King, and all was embracing, fainting, and terror. Cries for the seizure of the assassin now resounded on every side. He was grasped by a hundred hands, and torn out of the house. Then the universal voice demanded "God save the King" once more: the performers came forward; and the national chant, now almost elevated into a hymn, was sung by the audience, with a solemnity scarcely less than an act of devotion. All the powers of the stage never furnished a more touching, perhaps a

more sublime scene, than the simple reality of the whole occurrence before my eyes.

But at length the tumult sank; the order of the theatre was resumed; and the curtain rose, displaying a remarkably fine view of Roman architecture, a vista of temples and palaces,—the opening scene of Coriolanus.

The fame of the admirable actor who played the leading character was then at its height; and John Kemble shared with his splendid sister the honour of being the twin leaders of the theatrical galaxy. I am not about to dwell on Shakspeare's conception of the magnificent republican, nor on the scarcely less magnificent representative which it found in the actor of the night. But I speak to a generation which have never seen either Siddons or Kemble, and will probably never see their equals. I may be suffered, too, to indulge my own admiration of forms and faculties which once gave me a delighted sense of the beauty and the powers of which our being is capable. Is this a dream? or, if so, is it not a dream that tends to ennoble the spirit of man? The dimness and dulness of the passing world require relief;—I look for it in the world of recollections.

Kemble was, at that time, in the prime of his powers; his features strongly resembling those of Siddons; and his form the perfection of heroic grace and kingly grandeur. His voice was his failing point; it was hollow and interrupted; yet its tone was naturally sweet, and it could, at times, swell to the highest storm of passion. In later days he seemed to take a strange pride in feebleness, and, in his voice

and his person, affected old age. But, when I saw him first, he was all force, one of the handsomest of human beings, and, beyond all comparison, the most accomplished "classic" actor that ever realized the form and feelings of the classic age. His manners in private life completed his public fame; and, in seeing Kemble on the stage, we saw the grace and refinement acquired by the companionship of princes and nobles, fine ability accomplished by association with the high-born, and the high-bred of the land.

From the mingled tenderness and loftiness of Kemble's playing, a new idea of Coriolanus struck me. I had hitherto imagined him simply a bold patrician, aristocratically contemptuous of the multitude, indignant at public ingratitude, and taking a ruthless revenge. But the performance of the great actor, on this night, opened another and a deeper view to me. Till now, I had seen merely a gallant chieftain, of the most unromantic of all commonwealths, the land of inflexibility, remorseless daring, and fierce devotement to public duty. But, by throwing the softer feelings of the character into light, Kemble made him less a Roman than a Greek—a loftier and purer Alcibiades, a republican Alexander, or, most and truest of all, a Roman Achilles—with the same dazzling valour, the same sudden affections, the same deep conviction of wrong, and the same generous, but unyielding, sense of superiority. Say what we will, of the subordination of the actor to the author, the great actor shares his laurels. Kemble, too, was a creator.

But, while I followed, with eye and mind, the

movements of the stage, Lafontaine was otherwise employed. His opera-glass was roving the boxes; and he continually poured into my most ungrateful ear, remarks on the diplomatic body, and recognitions of the *merveilleux* glittering round the circle. At last, growing petulant at being thus disturbed, I turned to beg of him to be silent, when he simply said,—" La voilà!" and pointed to a group which had just taken their seats in one of the private boxes. From that time, I saw no more of the tragedy. The party consisted of Clotilde, Madame la Maréchal, and a stern but stately-looking man, in a rich uniform, who paid them the most marked attention.

" There is the marquis," said my companion ; " he has never smiled, probably, since he was born, or, I suppose, he would smile to-night; for the secretary to the embassy told me, not half an hour ago, that his marriage-contract had just come over, with the king's signature."

My heart sank within me at the sound. Still my gay informant went on, without concerning himself about feelings which I felt alternately torturing and chilling me.—" The match will be a capital one, if matters hold out for us.—For Montrecour is one of the largest proprietors in France; while, as he is rather of the new noblesse, the blood of the De Tourvilles will be of considerable service to his pedigree.—His new uniform shews me that he has got the colonelcy of my regiment; and, of course, I must attend his levee to-morrow. Will you come?"

My look was a sufficient answer. " Ah!" said he, " you will not. Ah! there is exactly the national

difference between us. Marriage opens the world to a French *belle*, as much as it shuts the world to an English one. Mademoiselle *is* certainly very handsome," said he, pausing, and fixing his opera-glass on her. "The contour of her countenance is positively fine;—it reminds me of a picture of Clairon in Medea, in the King's private apartments—her smile charming, her eyes brilliant, and her diamonds—they *are* perfect."

I listened, without daring to lift my eyes; he rambled on—"fortunate fellow, the Marquis—fortunate in every thing, but that intolerable physiognomy of his—Grand Ecuyer, Gold Key, Cross of Saint Louis, and on the point of being the husband of the finest woman between Calais and Constantinople. Of course, you intend to leave your card, on the marriage?"

"No," was my answer. I suppose that there was something in the sound, which struck him. He stared with palpable wonder.

"What! and you an old acquaintance? Have you not known her this month? Have you not walked, and talked, and waltzed, with her?"

"I have never spoken a word to her in my life."

"Well, then, you shall not be left in such a forlorn condition long. I must pay my respects to my colonel. I dare say you may do the same to the *fiancée*. Mademoiselle will, doubtless, be charmed to have some interruption to his dreary attentions."

I again refused, but the gay Frenchman was not to be so repulsed. He made a prodigious bow to the box, which was acknowledged by both the ladies. "There," said he, "the affair is settled. You cannot

possibly hesitate now; that bow is a summons to their box.—I can tell you also, that you are highly honoured; for, if it had been in Paris, you could not have got a sight of the bride, except under the surveillance of a pair of chaperons as grey and watchful as cats, or a couple of provincial uncles, as stiff as their own forefathers armed cap-a-pie."

I dared resist no longer; but with sensations, perhaps not unlike those of one ascending the scaffold, I mounted the stairs. As the door opened, and Lafontaine, tripping forward, announced my name, Clotilde's cheek wore a burning blush, which at the next instant passed away, and left her pale as marble. The few words of introduction over, she sank into total silence; and though she made an effort, from time to time, to smile at Lafontaine's frivolities, it was but a feeble one; and she sat, with pallid lips, and a hectic spot on her statue-like cheek, gazing on the carpet. I attempted to take some share in the conversation; but all my powers of speech were gone, my tongue refused to utter, and I remained the most complete and unfortunate contrast to my lively friend, who was now engaged in detailing the attempt on the royal life to Madame la Maréchal, whose later arrival had prevented her witnessing it in person. My nearer view of the Marquis did not improve the sketch which Lafontaine had given of his commanding officer. He was a tall and stiff, though soldierly-looking person; with an expression, which, as one was disposed to approve, or the reverse, might be called strong sense, or sullenness of temper. But he had some reputation in the service as a bold, if not an able, officer. He had

saved the French troops in America, by his daring, from the effects of some blunders committed by the giddiness of their commander-in-chief; and as his loyalty was not merely known, but violent, and his hatred of the new faction in France was not merely determined, but furious; he was regarded as one of the pillars of the royal cause. The Marquis was evidently in ill-humour; whether with our introduction on this night, or with his bride; yet it was too early for a matrimonial quarrel, and too late for a lover's one. Clotilde was as evidently unhappy; and after a few commonplaces we took our leave; the Marquis himself condescending to start from his seat, and shut the door upon our parting bow. The stage had now lost all interest for me, and I prevailed on Lafontaine, much against his will, to leave the house. The lobby was crowded, the rush was tremendous, and after struggling our way, with some hazard of our limbs, we reached the door, only just in time to see Montrecour escorting the ladies to their carriage.

All was now over for the night, and my companion, who perhaps began to think that he had tormented me too far; was drawing me slowly, and almost unconsciously, through the multitude; when a flourish of trumpets and drums announced, that their Majesties were leaving the theatre. The life-guards rode up; and the pressure of the crowd, the crash of the carriages, the prancing and restiveness of the startled horses, and the quarrelling of the coachmen and the Bow Street officers, produced a scene of uproar. My first thought was the hazard of Clotilde, and I hast-

ened to the spot where I had seen her; but she was gone.

"All's safe you see," said Lafontaine, trying to compose his ruffled costume; "your John Bulls are dangerous, in their loyalty, to coats and carriages." I agreed with him, and we sprang into one of the wretched hackney coaches, which held its ground, with English tenacity, in the midst of a war of coronets. But our adventures were not to close so simply. Our driver had not remained in the rain for hours, without applying to the national remedy against all inclemencies of weather. He had no sooner mounted the box, than I found, that we were running a race with every carriage which we approached, sometimes tilting against them, and sometimes narrowly escaping being overturned. At last we met with an antagonist worthy of our prowess. All my efforts to stop our charioteer had been useless, for he was beyond any kind of appeal, but that of flinging him from his seat; and Lafontaine, with the genuine fondness of a Gaul for excitement of all kinds, seemed wonderfully amused as we swept along. But our new rival was evidently in the same condition with our own Jehu; and after a smart horsewhipping of each other, they again rushed forward at full speed. A sudden scream from within the other carriage showed the terror of its inmates, as it dashed along; an old woman in full dress, however, was all that I could discover; for we were fairly distanced in the race, though it was still kept up, with all the perseverance of fools thoroughly intoxicated. In a few

minutes more, we heard a tremendous collision in front, and saw by the blaze of half a hundred flambeaux brandished in all directions, our rival a complete wreck, plunged into the midst of a crowd of equipages, waiting for their lordly owners in front of H—— House. It was the night of one of the weekly balls given by the Duchess; and the fallen vehicle had damaged panels covered with heraldry as old as the Plantagenets.

Arriving with almost equal rapidity, but with better fortune; I had but just time to bound into the street, at the instant when the old lady, writhing herself out of the window, which was now uppermost, was about to trust her portly person to chance. I caught her, as she clung to the carriage with her many-braceleted arms, and was almost strangled with the vigour of her involuntary embrace, as she rolled down upon me.

There was nothing in the world less romantic than my position, in the midst of a circle of sneering footmen; and, as if to put romance for ever out of the question, I was relieved from my plumed and mantled encumbrance, only by the assistance of Townshend, then the prince of Bow Street officers; who, knowing every thing and every body, informed me that the lady was a person of prodigious rank, and that he should 'feel it his duty,' before he parted with me, to 'ascertain whether her ladyship's purse had not suffered defalcation by my volunteering.'

I was indignant, as might be supposed; and my indignation was not at all decreased by the coming up of a group of Bow Street officers, every one of

whom either "believed," or "suspected," or "knew," me to be "an old offender." But I was relieved from the laughter of the liveried mob round me, and probably from figuring in the police histories of the morning, by the extreme terrors of the lady for the fate of her daughter. The carriage had by this time been raised up, but its other inmate was not to be found. She now produced the purse, which had been so impudently the cause of impeaching my honour; "and offered its contents to all who should bring any tidings of her daughter, her lost child, her Clotilde!" The name thrilled on my ear. I flew off, to renew the search, followed by the crowd—was unsuccessful, and returned, only to see my *protégée* in strong hysterics. My situation now became embarrassing; when a way was made through the crowd by a highly-powdered personage, the chamberlain of the mansion, who announced himself as sent by "her Grace," to say that the Countess de Tourville was safe; having been taken into the house; and, further, conveying "her Grace's compliments to Madame la Maréchal de Tourville, to entreat that she would do her the honour to join her daughter." This message, delivered with all the pomp of a "gentleman of the bedchamber," produced its immediate effect upon the circle of cocked hats and worsted epaulettes. They grew grave at once; and guided by Townshend, who moved on, hat in hand, and bowing with the obsequiousness of one escorting a prince of the blood, I reached the door of the mansion.

But, here a new difficulty arose. The duchess was

known to La Maréchale, for to whom in misfortune was not that most generous and kind-hearted duchess known? But *I* was still a stranger. However, with my old Frenchwoman, ceremony was not then the prevailing point. *I* had been her "preserver," as she was pleased to term me. *I* had been "presented at court," which was quite sufficient for universal knowledge; above all other merits, "I spoke French like a Parisian;" in short, it was wholly impossible for her to ascend the crowded staircase, with her numberless dislocations, by the help of any other arm on earth. The slightest hope of seeing Clotilde would have made me confront all the etiquette of Spain; and I bore the contrast of my undress costume with the feathered and silken multitude which filled the stairs, in the spirit of a philosopher; until, by "many a step and slow," we reached the private wing of the mansion.

There, in an apartment fitted up with all the luxury of a boudoir, yet looking melancholy, from the dim lights and the silent attendants, lay Clotilde on a sofa. But, how changed from the brilliant being whom I had just seen at the theatre! She had been in imminent danger, and was literally dragged from under the horses' feet. A slight wound in her temple was still bleeding, and her livid lips and half-closed eyes gave me the image of death. As for Madame *Mére*, she was distraction; the volubility of her sorrows made the well-trained domestics shrink, as from a display at which they ought not to be present; and at length, the only recipients of her woes were myself and the physician, who, with ominous visage, and drops in hand, was administering his aid to the passive patient.

Madame's despair rendering her wholly useless, the doctor called on me to assist him in raising her from the floor, on which she had flung herself like a heroine in tragedy.

While I was engaged in this most reluctant performance; the accents of a sweet voice, and the rustling of silk, made me raise my eyes, and a vision floated across the apartment; it was the duchess herself, glittering in gold and jewels, turbaned and embroidered, in the costume of a Semiramis or a queen of Sheba; she was brilliant enough for either. She had just left the fancy ball behind, and was come—"to make her personal inquiries for the health of her young friend."

My office was rather startling, even to the habitual presence of mind of the leader of fashion. I might have figured in her eyes, as the husband, or the lover, or the doctor's apprentice; she almost uttered a scream. But the sound, slight as it was, recalled the Maréchale to her senses. Her explanation was given with promptitude, and received with politeness. My family, in all its branches, came to her Grace's quick recollection; and I was thus indebted to my adventure, not only for an introduction to one of the most elegant women of her time—to the goddess of fashion in her very temple, to the Circe of high life, at the "witching hour;" but of being most "graciously" received; and even hearing a panegyric on my chivalry, from the Maréchale, smilingly echoed by lips which seemed made only for smiles.

A summons from the ball-room soon withdrew the captivating mistress of the mansion, who retired with

the step and glance of the queen of courtesy; and I was about to take my leave, when a ceremonial of still higher interest awaited me. Clotilde, feebly rising from the sofa, and sustaining herself on the neck of her kneeling mother, murmured her thanks to me "for the preservation of her dear parent." The sound of her voice, feeble as it was, fell on my ear like music. I advanced towards her. The Maréchale stood, with her handkerchief to her eyes, and venting her sensibilities in sobs. The fairer object before me shed no tears, but, with her eyes half-closed, and looking the marble model of paleness and beauty, she held out her hand. She was, perhaps, unconscious of offering more than a simple testimony of her gratitude for the services, which her mother had described with such needless eloquence. But in that delicious, yet unaccountable feeling—that superstition of the heart, which makes every thing eventful—even that simple pressure of her hand, created a long and living future in my mind.

Yet, let me do myself justice; whether wise or weak in the presence of the only being who had ever mastered my feelings; I was determined not "to point a moral and adorn a tale." I had other duties and other purposes before me, than to degenerate into a slave of sighs. I was to be no Romeo, bathing my soul in the luxuries of Italian palace-chambers, moonlight speeches, and the song of nightingales. I felt that I was an Englishman; who had the rugged steep of fortune to climb, and to climb it alone. The time, too, in which I was to begin my struggle aroused me, to shake off the rapturous and relaxing dreams

which threatened to steal over my nature. The spot in which I lived was the living metropolis of mankind. I was in the centre of the great machinery, which moved the living world. The wheels of the earth were rolling, and resounding in my ears. Every interest, necessity, stimulant, and passion of mankind, came, in an incessant current, to London, as to the universal heart; and flowed back, refreshed and invigorated, to the extremities of civilization.

I loved; but it was not with the sickly sentiment which flies to listlessness, and turns the day into visions. The absorbing passion which now filled every pulse of my being, only impelled me to a stronger resolve to do something, or be something, that would raise me above the lounging level of existence. To obtain honour, wealth, a name, and lay them all at the feet of the one idol, was the solemn resolution, as it was the animating hope of my life: and this was the time of times.

I saw the hourly operations of that mighty furnace, in which the fortunes of all nations were mingled; to be poured forth remoulded. And London itself was never more alive. Every journal which I took up, was filled with the signs of this extraordinary energy; with the projects and meetings, the harangues and political experiments, of bold men; some rising from the mire into notoriety, if not into fame; some plunging from the highest rank of public life into the mire, in the hope of rising, if with a darkened, yet a freshened, wing. The debates in parliament, never more vivid than at this crisis, with the two great parties in full force, and throwing out flashes at every move-

ment, like the collision of thunder clouds, were a perpetual summons to action, in every breast which felt itself above the dust it trod. But the French journals were the still wilder excitements to political ardour. They were more than lamps, guiding mankind along the dusky paths of public regeneration—they were torches, dazzling the multitude who attempted to profit by their light; and, while they threw a glare round the head of the march, blinding all who followed. To one born, like myself, in the most aristocratic system of society on earth, yet excluded from its advantages, by the mere chance of birth; it was new, and undoubtedly not displeasing, to see the pride of nobility tamed by the new talent and daring ambition which had started up from obscurity in France; village attorneys and physicians, clerks in offices, journalists, men from the plough and the pen, supplying the places of the noblesse of Clovis and Capet, possessing themselves of power, while their predecessors were flying through Europe; conducting negociations, commanding armies, ruling assemblies, and holding the helm of government, in the storm which had scattered the great names of France upon the waters. I anticipated all the triumph of the "younger sons."

Even the brief interval of my Brighton visit had curiously changed the aspect of the metropolis. The emigration was now in full tide, and every spot was corwded with foreign visages. Sallow cheeks and starting eyes, scowling brows and fierce moustaches, were the order of the day; the monks and the military had run off together. The English language was

almost overwhelmed by the perpetual jargon of all the loud-tongued provincialities of France. But the most singular portion was the ecclesiastical; the streets and parks were filled with the unlucky sheep of the Gallican church, scattered before the teeth and howl of the republican wolf. England, to her utter astonishment, saw, for the first time, the secrets of the monastery poured out before the light of day. The appearance of some among this sable multitude, though venerable and dignified, could not prevent the singularity of the others from having its effect on the spectator. The monks and priesthood of France amounted to little less than a hundred and fifty thousand. All were now thrown up from the darkness of centuries before a wondering world. I had Milton's vision of Limbo present to my eyes:—

> "Eremites and friars,
> A violent cross wind from either coast
> Blew them transverse. Then might ye see
> Cowls, hoods, and habits, with their wearers, tost,
> And flutter'd into rags; their reliques, beads,
> Indulgences, dispenses, pardons, bulls,
> The sport of winds."

The bed was terribly shaken in which the hierarchy had enjoyed its sleep and sunshine for a thousand years. The weeds and worms had been furiously scraped off, which for a thousand years had grown upon the keel of the national vessel; and of which the true wonder was, that the vessel had been able to make sail, with them clinging to her so long. I was thus witness to one of the most remarkable phenomena of the whole Revolution. The flight of the noblesse was nothing, to this change. The glitter-

ing peerage of France, created by a court, and living in perpetual connexion with the court, had naturally followed its fate; but here was a digging up of the moral sepulchre, a development of the great reliquary, a general extension of the subversive principle, to a race of existence which, whether above or below ground, seemed almost to form a part of the soil. Monkism was broken up, like a ship dashed against the iron shores of Biscay.—The ship was not only wrecked, but all its fragments continued to be tossed on the ceaseless surge. The Gallican church was flung loose over Europe, at a time when all Europe itself was in commotion. I own, to the discredit of my political foresight, that I thought it extinguished for ever. The monk was more tenacious of life, than I had dreamed. But if I erred, I did not err alone.

Mordecai, whom I found immersed deeper and deeper in continental politics, and who now scarcely denied his being the accredited agent of the emigrant princes; gave me his opinion of this strange portion of French society, with much more promptitude than he might, of the probable fall or rise of stocks.

"Of all the gamblers at the great gambling-table of France," said he, "the clergy have played their game the worst. By leaving their defence to the throne, they have only dragged down the throne. By relying on the good sense of the National Assembly, they have left themselves without a syllable to say. Like men pleading by counsel, they have been at the mercy of their counsel, and they have been ruined at once by weakness and by treachery."

On my observing to him that the church of France

was necessarily feebler than either the throne or the nobles, and that, therefore, its natural course was to depend on both—

"Rely upon it," said the keen Jew, "that any one great institution of the state which suffers itself, in the day of danger, to depend on any other for existence, will be ruined. When all are pressed, each will be glad to get rid of the pressure, by sacrificing the dependent. The church should have stood on its own defence. The Gallican hierarchy was, beyond all question, the most powerful in Europe. Rome and her cardinals were tinsel and toys, to the solid strength of the great provincial clergy of France. They had numbers, wealth, and station.—Those would give influence, among a population of Hottentots.—They threw them all away, at the first wave of a bloody handkerchief on the top of a Parisian pike. They had vast influence with the throne; but, what had once been energy they turned into encumbrance, and if the throne is now to be pulled down, it will be by their weight.—They had a third of the land in actual possession, and they allowed themselves to be stripped of it by the midnight vote of a drunken assembly. What if they were caricatured in Paris,—they had three-fourths of the population as fast bound to them as old habit and their daily bread could bind.—Three months ago, they might have marched to Paris, with their crucifixes in front, and three millions of stout peasantry in their rear, have captured the capital, and fricaseed the foolish and frightened legislature.—And now, they have archbishops, learning to live on a shilling a-day!"

From the Horse-guards I had yet obtained nothing, but promises of "being remembered on the first vacancy;" Clotilde was still a sufferer; and my time, like that of every man without an object, began to be a burden. My early prospect of laurels was fairly vanishing, hour by hour. I occasionally met Lafontaine; but, congenial as our tempers might be, our natures had all the "national difference;" and I sometimes envied, and as often disdained, his buoyancy. Even he, too, had his fluctuations; and a letter from Mariamne, a little more or less petulant, raised and sank him, like the spirit in a thermometer.

But, one day he rushed into my apartment with a look of that despair, which only foreigners can assume, and which actually gave me the idea that he was about to commit suicide. Flinging himself into a chair, and plunging his hand deep into his bosom, from which I almost expected to see him draw forth the fatal weapon, he extracted a paper, and held it forth to me. "Read!" he exclaimed, with the most pathetic tones of Talma in tragedy—"read my ruin!" I read; and found that it was a letter from his domineering little Jewess, commanding him to throw up his commission on the spot, and especially "not to visit France, on penalty of her eternal displeasure." My looks asked an explanation. "There!" cried the hero of the romance, "there!—see the caprice, the cruelty, the intolerable tyranny, of that most uncertain, intractable, and imperious of all human beings!" I had neither consolation nor contradiction to offer.

He then let me into his own secret; with an occasional episode, of the secrets of others—the sub-

stance of the whole being, that a counter-revolution was preparing in France; that, after conducting the correspondence in London for some time, he had been ordered to carry a despatch, of the highest importance, to the secret agency in Paris; and that the question was now between love and honour—Mariamne having, by some unlucky hint dropped from her father, received intimation of the design, and putting her *veto* on his bearing any part in it, in the most peremptory manner. What was to be done? The unfortunate youth was fairly on the horns of his dilemma, and he obviously saw no way of extrication, but the usual Parisian expedient of the pistol.

While he alternately raved and wept, the thought struck me—"Why might not I go in his place?" I was growing weary of the world, however little I knew of it. I had no Mariamne, either to prohibit, or to weep for me. The only being for whom I wished to live, was lost to me already. I offered myself as the carrier of the despatch, without delay.

I never saw ecstasy so visible in a human being; his eloquence exhausted the whole vocabulary of national rapture. "I was his friend, his brother, his preserver. I was the best, the ablest, the noblest of men." But when I attempted to escape from this overflow of gratitude, by observing on the very simple nature of the service; his recollection returned, and he generously endeavoured, with equal zeal, to dissuade me from an enterprise, of which the perils were certainly neither few nor trifling. He was now in despair at my obstinacy. The emigration of the French princes had not merely weakened their cause in

France, but had sharpened the malice of their enemies. Their agents had been arrested in all quarters, and any man who ventured to carry on a correspondence with them, was now alike in danger of assassination and of the law. After debating the matter long, without producing conviction on either side, it was finally agreed, to refer the question to Mordecai, whom Lafontaine now formally acknowledged to be master of the secret, on both sides of the Channel.

CHAPTER XI.

"Crowds in the lighted street;
And the chariots crush and roll;
And the stifling throng, as when numbers meet,
With one strong pulse of soul.
I plunged into that tide,
As it rushed resistless where
The proud city's portals wide
Shook to the stunning air."

SIMMONS.

I FOUND the Jew in his den, as usual, and communicated my object to the man of business, in as few words as possible, and in that tone which showed, that I had made up my mind. To my surprise, and, I must own, a little to the chagrin of my vanity; he made no opposition to it whatever. I afterwards ascertained that, on the day before, he had received a proposal of marriage for his daughter from a German *millionnaire*, of his own line; and that, as there could be no comparison between a penniless son-in-law, if he came of the blood of all the Paleologi; and one of the tribe of Issachar with his panniers loaded with guineas, the sooner I took my flight the better.

"You are perfectly right," said he, "in desiring to see the Continent; and in Paris you will find the Continent all gathered into a glance, as a French cook gives you a dozen sauces in compounding one fricassee. It happens, luckily enough, that I can just now furnish you with some opportunities for seeing it in the most convenient manner. A person with whom I have had occasional business in Downing Street, has applied to me to name an individual in my confidence, as an *attaché* to our embassy in France—though, be it understood, without a public appointment."

I started, at this dubious diplomacy.

"This," said he, "only shows, that you have still to learn the trade. Let me then tell you, that it is by such persons that all the real work of diplomacy is carried on. Can you suppose, that the perfumed and polished young gentlemen who, under the name of secretaries and sub-secretaries, superior and inferior *attachés*, and so forth, haunt the hotels of the embassy, are the real instruments? It is true, they are necessary to the dinners and balls of the embassy. They are also useful to drive out the ambassador's horses to air, escort his wife, and dance with his daughters. But the business is uniformly done by somebody, of whom nobody knows anything, but that he is never seen loitering about the ambassador's drawing-room; though he has the *entrée* of his closet; and that he never makes charades; though he corresponds from day to day with the government at home. Of course, you will accept the

appointment—and now, let me give you your credentials."

He unlocked a cabinet, which, except for its dust and the coating of cobwebs which time had wrought upon it, might have figured in the saloons of the Medici. The succession of springs which he touched, and of secret drawers which sprang out, at the touch, might have supplied a little history of Italian intrigue. At last, he found the roll of papers which he sought; and having first thrown a glance round the room, as if a spy sat on every chair, he began to unroll them; with a rapid criticism on each, as the first few lines met his eye. Every nerve of his countenance was in full play, while he looked over those specimens of the wisdom of the wise. He would have been an invaluable study to a Lavater. He had evidently almost forgotten that I was present; and the alternate ridicule and disdain of his powerful physiognomy were assisted, to my comprehension, by notes from time to time, certainly the antipodes of flattery—"paltry knave"—"pompous fool"—"specious swindler." "Ambassador! ay, if we were to send one to a nation of baboons." "Here," said he, throwing the bundle on the table, "if I did not despise mankind enough already, I have sufficient evidence to throng the pillory—I deal in gold; well, it is only such that can know the world. Hate, ambition, religion, all have their hypocrisies; but money applies the thumb-screw to them all. Waste, and Want, are the masters of mankind! There have been men—ay, and

women too—within this dungeon, as you think it, whose names would astonish you. Oh! Father Abraham"——

I finished the quotation.—"What fools these Christians are!" He burst into grim laughter. "Here I have the paper," said he, "and I must immediately send you back to the secretary's office. But, there you must not be known.—Secrecy is essential to your mission, even to your life. In Paris, stabbing has grown common, and the knowledge that you had any other purpose than gambling, might be repaid by a poniard."

He now prepared his note, and as he wrote, continued his conversation, in fragments.—"Three-fourths of mankind are mere blunderers, and the more you know of them, the more you will be of my opinion.—I am by no means sure that we have not some of them in Whitehall itself. Pitt is a powerful man, and he alone keeps them together; without him they would be potsherds.—Pitt thinks that we can go on without a war: he is mistaken. How is it possible to keep Europe in peace, when the Continent is as rotten as thatch, and France as combustible as gunpowder?—The minister is a man of wonders, but he cannot prevent thirty millions of maniacs from playing their antics, until they are cooled by blood-letting; or a hundred millions of dozing Germans, Spaniards, Dutch, and Italians, from being pilfered to their last coin!—Old Frederick, the greatest genius that ever sat upon a German throne, saw all this, fifty years ago. I have him at this moment before my eyes, as he used to

walk, with his hands behind his bent back, in his little parterre, at Sans Souci. I myself heard him utter the words—'If I were King of France, not a cannon-shot should be fired in Europe without my permission.' He was right. France governed by fools, is nothing. But, if she shall ever have an able man at her head, she will realize old Frederick's opinion."

As no time was to be lost, I hastened, with my note of introduction, to Whitehall; and was ushered through a succession of dingy offices into a small chamber, where I found, busily employed at an escritoire, a young man, of a heavy, yet not unintelligent countenance. He read my note, asked "whether I had ever been in Paris, from which he had just returned;" uttered a sentence or two in the worst possible French, congratulated me on the importance of my mission, rang his bell, and handed me a small packet, endorsed—*most secret and confidential.* He then made the most awkward of bows; and our interview was at an end.—I afterwards saw this man prime minister.

Till now, the interest of any new purpose had kept me in excitement; but I found, to my surprise, my spirits suddenly flag, and a dejection wholly unaccountable, seize upon me. Perhaps something like this, occurs after all strong excitement; but a cloud seemed actually to draw over my mind. My thoughts from hour to hour even fell into confusion—I deeply repented, having involved myself in a design, which required qualities so much more experienced; and in which, if I failed, the consequences might be so ruinous, not merely to my own character, but to

noble and even to royal lives. I now felt the whole truth of Hamlet's description—the world "flat, stale, and unprofitable;" the sky a "congregation of pestilent vapours." It was a general, undefined feeling, of having undertaken a task too difficult for my powers, of having incurred an overwhelming responsibility; of having desperately engaged myself in a service, in which I could neither advance with hope, nor retreat with honour.

After a week of this feverish fluctuation, I received a note, saying, that I had but six hours before me, and that I must leave London at midnight.

I strayed involuntarily towards H——— House: It was one of its state dinner-days, and the street rang with the incessant setting down of the guests. As I passed through the crowd, Lafontaine stood before me. He was in uniform, and looked showily. He was to be one of the party, and his manner had all the animation, which scenes of this order naturally excite in those with whom the world goes well. But, my countenance evidently startled him, and he attempted to offer such consolation as was to be found in telling me, that if La Comtesse was visible, he should not fail to tell her of the noble manner in which I had volunteered; and the happiness which I had thus secured to him and Mariamne. "You may rely on it," said he, "that I shall make her sick of Monsieur le Marquis and his sulky physiognomy.—I shall dance with her, I shall talk to her, and you shall be the subject, as you so well deserve."

"But, her marriage is inevitable," was my sole answer.

"Oh, true; inevitable! But that makes no possible difference. You cannot marry all the women you may admire, nor they you. So, the only imaginable resource is, to obtain their friendship, to be their *pastor fido*, their hero, their Amadis. You then have the *entrée* of their houses, the honour of their confidence, and the favoured seat in their boxes; till you prefer the favoured seat at their firesides, and all grow old together."

The sound of a neighbouring church clock broke off our dialogue. He took out his diamond watch, compared it with the time, found, that to delay a moment longer would be a solecism, which might lose him a smile or be punished with a frown; repeated a couplet on the pangs of parting with friends; and with an embrace, in the most glowing style of Paris, bounded across the street, and was lost in the crowd which blocked up her grace's portal.

Thus parted the gay lieutenant and myself; he to float along the tide of fashion in its most sparkling current—I to tread the twilight paths of the "Green park," in helplessness and heaviness of soul.

This interview had not the more reconciled me to life. I was vexed with, what I regarded, as the nonchalance of my friend, and began to wish that I had left him to go through with his own affairs as he might. But reflection did justice to his gallant spirit, and I mentally thanked him, for having relieved me from the life of an idler. I heard a rapid step; and my name pronounced by a familiar voice; it was Mordecai's. He had brought me some addi-

tional letters to the leaders of the party in Paris. We returned to the hotel, and sat down to our final meal together. When the lights were brought in, I saw that he looked at me with some degree of surprise, and even of alarm. "You are ill," said he; "the life of London is too much for you. There are but three things that constitute health in this world—air, exercise, and employment." I acknowledged to him my misgivings as to my fitness for the mission. But he was a man of the world. He asked me, "Do you desire to resign? If so, I have the power to revoke it at this moment. And you can do this without loss of honour, for it is known to but two persons in England—Lafontaine and myself. I have not concealed its danger from you, and I have just ascertained, that even the personal danger is greater than I thought. In fact, one of my objects in coming to you to-night was, to apprise you of the state of things, if not to recommend your giving up the mission altogether."

The alternative was now plainly before me; and, stern as was the nature of the Israelite, I saw evidently that he would be gratified by my abandoning the project. But this was suddenly out of the question. The mission, to escape which, in the half hour before I should have gladly given up every shilling I ever hoped to possess, was at once fixed in my mind as a peculiar bounty of fortune. There are periods in the human heart, like those which we observe in nature—the atmosphere brightens by the tempest. The struggle which had shaken me so long had now passed away, and things assumed as

new and distinct an aspect, as a hill or a forest in the distance might, on the passing away of a cloud. Mordecai argued against my enthusiasm; but when was enthusiasm ever out-argued? I drove him, horse and foot, from the field. I did more; enthusiasm is contagious— I made him my convert. The restless fire of my heart lent itself to my tongue, and I talked so loftily of revolutions and counter-revolutions; of the matchless and splendid opportunity of seeing humankind pouring, like metal from the forge, into new shapes of society; of intellectual millions acting on a new scale of power, of nations summoned to a new order of existence; that I began to melt even the rigid prepossessions of that mass of granite, or iron, or whatever is most intractable, the Jew. I could perceive his countenance changing from a smile to seriousness; and, as I declaimed, I could see his hollow eye sparkle, and his sallow lip quiver, with impressions not unlike my own.

"Whether you are fit for a politician," said he, "I cannot tell; for the trade is of a mingled web, and has its rough side as well as its smooth one. But, young as you are, and old as I am, there are some notions in which we do not differ, so much as in our years. I have long seen, that the world was about to undergo some extraordinary change. That it should ever come from the rabble of Paris, I must confess, had not entered into my mind; a rope of sand, or a mountain of feathers, would have been as fully within my comprehension.—I might have understood it, had it come from John Bull. But I have lived in France, and I never expected any thing

from the people; more than I should expect to see the waterworks of Versailles turned into a canal, or irrigating the thirsty acres round the palace."

"Well," I observed; "their sporting and sparkling answers their purpose. They amuse the holiday multitude for a day."

"And are dry for a week.—If France shall have a revolution, it will be as much a matter of mechanism, of show, and of holiday, as the '*grand jet-d'eau.*'" Yet, even he was mistaken. We ended with a parting health to Mariamne, and his promise to attend to my interests at the Horse-guards, on which I was still strongly bent. The Jew was clearly no sentimentalist; but the glass of wine, and the few words of civility and recollection with which I had devoted it to his pretty daughter, evidently touched the father's heart. He lingered on the steps of the hotel, and still held my hand. "You shall not," said he, "be the worse for your good wishes, nor for that glass of wine. I shall attend to your business at Whitehall when you are gone; and you might have worse friends than Mordecai even there." He seemed big with some disclosure of his influence, but suddenly checked himself. "At all events," he added, "your services on the present occasion shall not be forgotten. You have a bold, ay, and a broad career before you. One thing I shall tell you. We shall certainly have war. The government here are blind to it. Even the prime minister—and there is not a more sagacious mind on the face of the earth—is inclined to think that it may be averted. But I tell you, as the first secret which you may insert in

your despatches, that it will come, and when it does, it will be sudden, desperate, and universal."

"May I not ask from what source you have derived your information? it will at least strengthen mine."

"You may tell the minister, or the world, that you had it from Mordecai. I lay on you only one injunction—that you shall not mention it within a week. I have received it from our brethren on the Continent, as a matter of business. I give it to you here as a flourish for your first essay in diplomacy."

We had now reached the door of the post-chaise. He drew out another letter. "This," said he, "is from my daughter. Before you come among us again, she will probably be the wife of one of our nation, and that one, the richest among us. But she still values you as the preserver of her life, and sends you a letter to one of our most intimate friends in Paris. If he shall not be frightened out of it by the violence of the mob, you will find him and his family hospitable. Now farewell!" He turned away.

I sprang into the post-chaise, in which was already seated a French courier, with despatches from his minister; whose attendance the Jew had secured, to lighten the first inconveniences to a young traveller. The word was given—we dashed along the Dover road, and I soon gave my last gaze to London, with its fiery haze hanging over it, like the flame of a conflagration.

My mind was still in a whirl as rapid as my wheels. Hope, doubt, and determination passed through my brain in quick succession; yet there was one thought

that came, like Shakspeare's "delicate spirit," in all the tumult of soul, of which, like Ariel in the storm, it was the chief cause, to soothe and subdue me. Hastily as I had driven from the door of my hotel, I had time to cast my eye along the front of H —— House. All the windows of its principal apartments shone with almost noonday brightness; uniforms glittered, and plumes waved, in the momentary view. But in the range above, all was dark; except one window—the window of the boudoir—and there the light was of the dim and melancholy hue which instinctively gives the impression of the sick-chamber. Was Clotilde still there, feebly counting the hours of pain, while all within her hearing was festivity? The answers which I had received to my daily enquiries were cheerless. "The countess had not quitted the apartment where she had been first conveyed."—"The duchess insisted on her not being removed."—"Madame was inconsolable; but the doctor had hopes." Those, and other common-places of information, were all that I could glean from either the complacent chamberlains or the formal physician. And now, I was to give up even this meagre knowledge, and plunge into scenes which might separate us for ever! But were we not separated already? If she recovered, must she not be in the power of a task-master? If she sank under her feebleness, what was earth to me?

In those reveries I passed the hours until day-break, when the sun and the sea rose together on my wearied eyes.

The bustle of Dover aroused me to a sense of the

world. All was animation on sea and shore. The emigration was now in full flow, and France was pouring down her terrified thousands on the nearest coast. The harbour was crowded with vessels of every kind, which had just disgorged themselves of their living cargoes; the streets were blocked up with foreign carriages; the foreign population had completely overpowered the native, and the town swarmed with strangers of every rank and dress, all with the hurried look of escaped fugitives. As I drove to the hotel, my ear rang with foreign accents, and my eyes were filled with foreign physiognomies. From time to time the band of a regiment, which had furnished a guard to some of the French blood-royal, mingled its drums and trumpets with the sound of sea and shore; and, as I gazed on the moving multitude from my window, the thunder of the guns from the castle, for the arrival of some prince, or ambassador, grandly completed the general mass and power of the uproar.

Three hours carried me to the French shore. Free from all the vulgar vexations of the road, I had the full enjoyment of one of the most pleasant of all enjoyments—moving at one's ease through a new and interesting country. The road to Paris is now like the road to Windsor, to all the higher portions of my countrymen; but then it was much less known even to them than in later days, and the circumstances of the time gave it a totally new character. It was the difference between travelling through a country in a state of peace, and one in a state of war; between going to visit some superb palace for the purpose of

viewing its paintings and curiosities, and hurrying to see what part of its magnificence had escaped an earthquake. The landscape had literally the look of war; troops were encamped in the neighbourhood of the principal towns; the national guards were exercising in the fields; mimic processions of children were beating drums and displaying banners in the streets; and the popular songs were all for the conquest of every thing beneath the moon.

But I was to have a higher spectacle. And I shall never forget the mixture of wonder and awe, which I felt at the first distant sight of the capital.

It was at the close of a long day's journey, while the twilight gave a mysterious hue to a scene in itself singular and stately. — Glistening spire on spire; massive piles, which in the deepening haze might seem either prisons or palaces; vast ranges of buildings, gloomy or glittering as the partial ray fell on them; with the solemn beauty of the Invalides on one wing, the light and lovely elegance of the St. Genevieve on the other, and the frowning majesty of Nôtre Dame in the midst,—all filling the plain with a vision such as I had imaged only in an Arabian tale. Yet the moral reality was even greater than the visible. I felt, that I was within reach of the chief seat of all the leading events of the Continent since the birth of monarchy; every step which I might tread among those piles was historical; within that clouded circumference, like the circle of a necromancer, had been raised all the dazzling and all the disturbing spirits of the world. There was the grand display of statesmanship, pomp, ambition, pleasure,

and each, of the most subtle, splendid, daring, and prodigal species ever seen among men. And, was it not now to assume even a more powerful influence on the fates of mankind? Was not the felling of the monarchical forest, which had stood for so many centuries, about to lay the land open to a new, and perhaps a more powerful produce; where the free blasts of nature were to rear new forms, and demand new arts of cultivation? The monarchy was falling—but was not the space, cleared of its ruins, to be filled up by some new structure, statelier still? Or, if the government of the Bourbons were to sink for ever from the eyes of men, were there to be no discoveries made in the gulf itself in which it went down; were there to be no treasures found in the recesses thus thrown open to the eye for the first time; no mines in the dissevered strata; no founts of inexhaustible freshness and flow opened, by thus piercing into the bowels of the land?

There are moments, on which the destiny of a nation, perhaps of an age, turns. I had reached Paris at one of those moments. As my *calèche* wound its slow way round the base of Montmartre, I perceived, through the deepening twilight, a long train of flame, spreading from the horizon to the gates of the city. Shouts were heard, with now and then the heavy sounds of cannon. This produced a dead stop in my progress. My postillion stoutly protested against venturing his *calèche*, his horses, and, what he probably regarded much more than either, himself; into the very heart of what he pronounced, a counter-revolution. My courier, freighted with des-

patches, which might have been high treason to the majesty of the mob, and who saw nothing less than suspension from the first lamp-post in their discovery, protested, with about the same number of *sacres;* and my diplomatic beams seemed in a fair way to be shorn.

But this was the actual sight, which I had come to see—Paris in its new existence; the capital of the populace; the head-quarters of the grand army of insurgency; the living centre of all those flashes of fantasy, fury, and fire, which were already darting out towards every throne of Europe. I determined to have a voice on the occasion, and I exerted it with such vigour, that I roused the inmates of a block-house, a party of the National Guard, who, early as it was, had been as fast asleep as if they had been a *posse* of city watchmen. They clustered round us, applauded my resolve to see what was to be seen, as perfectly national, *vraiment Français;* kicked my postillion till he mounted his horse, beat my sulky courier with the flats of their little swords, and would have bastinadoed, or probably hanged him, if I had not interposed; and, finally, hoisting me into the *calèche,* which they loaded with half a dozen of their number before and behind, commenced our march into Paris. This was evidently not the age of discipline.

It may have been owing to this curious escort that I got in at all; for at the gate I found a strong guard of the regular troops, who drove back a long succession of carriages which had preceded me. But my *cortége* were so thoroughly in the new fashion,

they danced the "*carmagnole*" so boisterously, and sang patriotic rhymes with such strength of lungs, that it was impossible to refuse admission to patriots of such sonorousness. The popular conjectures, too, which fell to my share, vastly increased my importance. In the course of the five minutes spent in wading through the crowd of the rejected, I bore fifty different characters;—I was a state prisoner; a deputy from Marseilles, a part of the kingdom then in peculiar favour; an ex-general; a captain of banditti, and an ambassador from England or America; in either case, an especially honoured missionary, for England was then pronounced by all the Parisian authorities to be on the verge of a revolution. Though, I believe, Jonathan had the preference, for the double reason, that the love of Jean Français for John Bull is of a rather precarious order, and that the American Revolution was an egg hatched by the warmth of the Gallic bird, itself a secondary sort of parentage.

As we advanced through the streets, my noisy "*compagnons de voyage*" dropped off one by one, some to the lowest places of entertainment, and some tired of the jest; and I proceeded to the Place de Vendôme, to look for my hotel, at my leisure. The streets were now solitary, to a degree that was almost startling. As I wound my way through long lines of houses, tortuous, narrow, and dark as Erebus, I saw the cause of the singular success which had attended all Parisian insurrections. A chain across one of these dismal streets, an overturned cart, a pile of stones, would convert it at once into an im-

passable defile. Walls and windows, massive, lofty, and nearly touching each other from above, afforded a perpetual fortification; lanes innumerable, and extending from one depth of darkness and intricacy into another, a network of attack and ambush, obviously gave an extraordinary advantage to the irregular daring of men accustomed to thread those wretched and dismal dens, crowded with one of the fiercest and most capricious populations in the world. Times have strikingly changed since. The "fifteen fortresses" are but so many strong bars of the great cage, and they are neither too strong nor too many. Paris is now the only city on earth which is defended against itself, garrisoned on its outside, and protected by a perpetual Prætorian band against a national mania of insurrection.

But, on turning into the Boulevardes, the scene changed, with the rapidity of magic. Before me were raging thousands, the multitude which I had seen advancing to the gates. The houses, as far as the eye could reach, were lighted up with lamps, torches, and every sort of hurried illumination. Banners of all hues were waving from the casements, or borne along by the people; and in the midst of the wild procession were seen at a distance a train of travelling carriages, loaded on the roofs with the basest of the rabble. A mixed crowd of National Guards, covered with dust, and drooping under the fatigue of the road; poissardes drunk, dancing, and screaming the most horrid blasphemies; and a still wider circle, which seemed to me recruited from all the jails of Paris, surrounded the carriages; which I

at length understood to be those of the royal family. They had attempted to escape to the frontier, had been arrested, and were now returning as prisoners. I caught a glimpse, by the torchlight, of the illustrious sufferers, as they passed the spot where I stood. The Queen was pale, but exhibited that stateliness of countenance for which she was memorable to the last; she sat with the Dauphiness pressed in her arms. The King looked overcome with exhaustion; the Dauphin gazed at the populace with a child's curiosity.

At the moment when the carriages were passing, an incident occurred, terribly characteristic of the time. A man of noble presence, and with the order of St. Louis on his breast, who had been giving me a hurried and anxious explanation of the scene; excited by sudden feeling, rushed forward through the escort, and laying one hand on the royal carriage, with the other waved his hat, and shouted, "Vive le Roi!" In another instant I saw him stagger; a pike had been darted into his bosom, and he fell dead under the wheel. Before the confusion of this frightful catastrophe had subsided; a casement was opened immediately above my head, and a woman, superbly dressed, rushed out on the balcony, waving a white scarf, and crying, "Vive Marie Antoinette!" The muskets of the escort were turned upon her, and a volley was fired at the balcony. She started back at the shock, and a long gush of blood down her white robe showed that she had been wounded. But she again waved the scarf, and again uttered the loyal cry. Successive shots were fired at her by the

monsters beneath; but she still stood. At length, she received the mortal blow; she tottered and fell, yet, still clinging to the front of the balcony, she waved the scarf, and constantly attempted to pronounce the words of her generous and devoted heart, until she expired! I saw this scene with an emotion beyond my power to describe; all the enthusiasm of popular change was chilled within me; my boyish imaginations of republicanism were extinguished by this plunge into innocent blood; and I never felt more relieved, than when the whole fearful procession finally moved on, and I was left to make my way once more, through dim and silent streets, to my dwelling.

CHAPTER XII.

" There shrieks of captured towns, and widows' tears,
Pale warriors stretched upon their blood-stain'd biers,
The mighty tumbled from their golden height,
The trackless desert and the polar night,
The stern-eyed victor, with his host behind,
Fame, wealth, and power, with bleeding hearts resign'd."

DARWIN.

THE Revolution was like the tiger, it advanced couching; though, when it sprang, its bound was sudden and irresistible. My time was occupied in official functions, which became constantly more important, and of which I received flattering opinions from Downing Street. I mingled extensively in general society, and it was never more animated, or more characteristic, than at that period in Paris. The leaders of faction and the leaders of fashion, classes so different in every other part of the world, were there often the same. The woman who dazzled the ball-room, was frequently the *confidante* of the deepest designs of party. The coterie in a *salon* covered with gilding, and filled with *chefs-d'œuvre* of the arts, was often as subtle as a conspiracy in the cells of the Jacobins; and the dance or the masque-

rade was only the preliminary to an outbreak which shattered a ministry into fragments. All the remarkable men of France passed before me, and I acknowledge that I was frequently delighted and surprised by their extraordinary attainments. The age of the *Encyclopédie* was in its wane, but some of its brilliant names still illustrated the Parisian *salons*. I recognised the style of Buffon and Rousseau in a crowd of their successors; and the most important knowledge was frequently communicated in language the most captivating. Even the mixture of society which had been created by the Revolution, gave an original force and freshness to these assemblies, infinitely more attractive than the elaborate polish of the old *régime*. Brissot, once a common printer, but a man of singular force of language, there figured by Condorcet, the noble, and the man of profound science. St. Etienne, the little bustling partizan, mingled with the chief advocates of the Parisian courts; or Servan fenced, with his subtle knowledge of the world, against Vergniaud, the romantic Girondist, but the most Ciceronian of orators. Talleyrand, already known as the most sarcastic of men, and Maury, by far the most powerful debater of France, since Mirabeau; figured among the chief ornaments of the *salons* of De Staël, Roland, and the splendid Theresa Cabarrus; and even the flutter of La Fayette, and the sullen sententiousness of Robespierre, then known only as a provincial deputy; furnished a background which increased the prominence of the grouping.

But the greatest wonder of France still escaped

the general eye. At a ball at the Hôtel de Staël, I remember to have been struck with the energetic denunciation of some rabble insult to the Royal family, by an officer whom nobody knew. As the circle were standing, in conversation on the topic of the day, the little officer started from his seat, pushed into the group, and expressed his contempt for the populace; and his scorn for the supineness of the Government on those occasions, so strongly, as to turn all eyes upon him. "Where were the troops, where the guns?" he exclaimed. "If such things are suffered, all is over with royalty; a squadron of horse, and a couple of six-pounders, would have swept away the whole swarm of scoundrels, like so many flies." Having thus discharged his soul, he started back again, flung himself into a chair, and did not utter another word throughout the evening. I little dreamed that in that meagre frame, and long thin physiognomy, I saw Napoleon.

I must hasten to other things. Yet I still cast many a lingering glance over these times. The vividness of their collisions was incomparable. The wit, the eccentricity, the anecdote, the eloquence, of those assemblages, were of a character wholly their own. They had, too, a substantial nutriment, the want of which made the conversation of the preceding age vapid, with all its elegance.—Public events of the most powerful order fed the flame; it was the creation of a vast national excitement; the rush of sparks from the great electrical machine, turned by the hands of thirty millions. The flashes were yet, only matters of sport and surprise. But the time

was nigh, when those flashes were to be fatal, and that gay lustre was to do the work of conflagration.

I had now been for some time in Paris, without returning, or wishing to return, to London. A letter now and then informed me of the state of those, who still drew my feelings towards England. But I was in the centre of all that awoke, agitated, or alarmed Europe; and, compared with the glow and rapidity of events in France, the rest of Europe appeared asleep, or to open its eyes, solely when some new explosion shook it from its slumber.

My position, too, was a matchless school for the learner in diplomacy. France now shaped the politics of the Continent; and I was present at the furnace where the casting was performed. France was the stage, to which every eye in Europe was turned, whether for its comedy or its tragedy; and I was behind the scenes. But the change was at hand.

One night I found an individual, of a very marked appearance, waiting for me at my hotel. His countenance was evidently Jewish, and he introduced himself as one of the secret police of the ministry. The man handed me a letter—it was from Mordecai, and directed to be given with the utmost secrecy. It was in his usual succinct and rapid style.

"I write this in the midst of a tumult of business. My friend Mendoza will give you such knowledge and assistance as may be necessary.—France is on the point of an explosion. Every thing is prepared. It is impossible that it can be delayed above a week or two, and the only cause of the delay is the determination to make the overthrow final. Acquaint

your English officials with this.—The monarchy of the Bourbons has signed its own death-warrant. By suffering a legislature to be formed by the votes of the multitude, it has flung all property into the power of beggars; rank has been left at the mercy of the rabble; and the church has been sacrificed to a faction. Thus, the three pillars of society have been cut away; and the throne is left in the air. Mendoza will tell you more.—The train is already laid. A letter from a confidential agent tells me, that the day is fixed.—At all events, avoid the mine. There is no pleasure in being blown up, even in company with kings."

A postscript briefly added, that his daughter sent her recollections; that Clotilde was still indisposed; Lafontaine giddier than ever; and, as the proof of his own confidence in his views, that "he had just sold out 100,000 three per cent. consols."

My first visit next morning was to the British embassy. But the ambassador was absent in the country; and the functionary who had been left in charge, was taking lessons on the guitar, and extremely unwilling to be disturbed by matters comparatively so trifling, as the fate of dynasties. I explained, but explained in vain. The hour was at hand, "when his horses were to be at the door, for a ride in the Bois de Boulogne." I recommended a ride after the ambassador. "It was impossible.—He was to be the escort of a duchess; then to go to a dinner at the Russian embassy, and was under engagements for three balls in the evening." Nothing could be clearer than that such duties must supersede

the slight concerns of office. I left him under the hands of his valet, curling his ringlets, and preparing to be the admiration of mankind.

I instantly summoned Mendoza again; received from him additional intelligence; and, as I was not inclined to make a second experiment on the "elegant extract" of diplomacy, and escort of duchesses; I went, as soon as nightfall concealed my visit, to the hotel of the Foreign Minister. This was my first interview with the celebrated Dumourier.

The minister received me with the courtesy of a man of high life; and I entered on the purport of my visit at once. He was "perfectly astonished at my tidings; he had known, that strong resolutions had been adopted, by the party opposed to the Cabinet; but now heard, for the first time, the distinct avowal of its intention to overthrow the monarchy." I was struck with his appearance, his quickness of conception, and that mixture of sportiveness and depth, which I had found characteristic of the higher orders of French society. His figure too was characteristic, undersized, but of the most muscular and active proportions; his movements were restless and eager; hand, eye, and tongue in perpetual motion; his countenance bold, but with smiling lips and a most penetrating grey eye. As a soldier he was at this period wholly unknown; but I could imagine in him a leader equally subtle and daring;—he soon realized my conjecture.

We sat together until midnight; and over the supper-table, and cheered with the good things, which French taste provides and enjoys more than any

other on earth, he gave full flow to his spirit of communication. The Frenchman's sentences are like sabre-cuts—they have succession, but no connexion.

"I shall always converse with you, M. Marston," said he, "with ease; for you are of the noblesse of your own great country, and I am tired of *roturiers* already.—The government has committed dangerous faults.—The king is an excellent man, but his heart is where his head ought to be, and his head where his heart.—His flight was a terrible affair, but it was a blunder, on both sides; *he* ought never to have gone, or the government ought never to have brought him back.—However, I have no cause to complain of its epitaph. The blunder dissolved the government. I have to thank it for bringing me and my colleagues into power. Our business now is to preserve the monarchy."

I adverted to the personal character of the royal family.

"Nothing can be better. But chance has placed them in a false position.—If the king were but the first prince of the blood, his benevolence without his responsibility would make him the most popular man in France.—If the queen were still but the dauphiness, she would be, as she was then, all but worshipped. Simply as the leader of fashion in France, she would be the leader of taste in Europe.—Elegant, animated, and high-minded, she would have charmed every one, without power. If she could but continue to move along the ground, all would admire the grace of her steps; but, sitting on a throne, she loses the spell of motion."

"Yet can France ever forget her old allegiance, and adopt the fierce follies of a republic?"

"I think not." He mused for a moment; and then said, in a tone of strong feeling, "The fact is, that we are dealing with agencies, of which we know nothing but the tremendous force.—We are breathing a new atmosphere, which may at first excite, only to kill.—We have let out the waters of a new river-head, which continues pouring from hour to hour, with a fulness sufficient to terrify us already, and threatening to swell over all the ancient landmarks of the soil.—It is even now a torrent; what can prevent it from being a lake? what hand of man can prevent that lake from being an ocean? or what power of human counsel can say to that ocean in its rage; Thus far shalt thou go?"

"But, *Monsieur le Ministre*, the great institutions of France, will they not form a barrier? Is not their ancient firmness proof against the loose assaults of a populace like that of Paris?"

"Ah; how very English all that is! your countrymen never believe in the existence of danger. I answer by an image which occurred to me on my late tour of inspection to the ports of the west. At Cherbourg, millions of francs had been spent in attempting to make a harbour. While I was there, one stormy day, the ocean rose, and the first thing swept away was the great *caisson* which formed the principal defence against the tide; its wrecks were carried up the harbour, heaped against the piers, which they swept away; and hurled against the fortifications, which they broke down; finally working ten times

more damage than if the affair had been left to the surges alone. The thought struck me at the moment, that this *caisson* was the emblem of a government assailed like ours. The loftier the superstructure, the surer it is to be ultimately carried away, and to carry away with it all that mere time would have spared.—The massiveness of the obstacle increases the spread of the ruin. Your monarchy is firmer. Its strength is in its nature. It is less a vast building, than a mighty tree; not fixed on foundations which can never widen, but growing from roots which continually extend. But, if that tree perish, it will not be thrown down, but torn up; it will not leave a space levelled to receive a new work of man; but a pit, which no successor can fill, for a thousand years."

"But the insurrection; I fear the attack on the palace," said I.

"It will not take place. Your information shall be forwarded to the court; where, however, I doubt whether it will be received with much credence. The Austrian declaration of war has put the flatterers of royalty into such spirits, that if the tocsin were sounding in their ears; they would scarcely believe in the danger. We have been unfortunately forced to send the chief part of the garrison of Paris to the frontier. But we have three battalions of the Swiss guard within call, at Courbevoie.—Rely upon it, all will go well."

With this assurance I was forced to be content; but I relied much more on my Jewish intelligence. A despatch to London gave a minute of our conversation, before I laid my head on the pillow; and I

flung myself down, not without a glance at the tall roofs of the Tuileries, and a reflection on how much the man escapes, whose forehead has no wrinkle from the diadem.

Within twenty-four hours of this interview, the ministry was dissolved! Dumourier was gone post-haste, to take the command of one of the armies on the frontier; merely to save his life from the mob; and I went to bed, in the Place Vendôme, by the light of La Fayette burned in effigy in the centre of the square. So much for popularity.

At dusk, on the ninth of August, as I was sitting in a *café* at the Palais Royal, listening to the mountain songs of a party of Swiss minstrels in front of the door, Mendoza, passing through the crowd, made me a signal; and I immediately followed him to an obscure corner of one of the galleries.

"The insurrection is fixed for to-night," was his startling announcement. "At twelve by the clock of Nôtre-Dame, all the sections will be under arms. The Jacobin club, the club of the Cordeliers, and the Faubourg St. Antoine, are the alarm posts. The Marseillais are posted at the Cordeliers, and are to head the attack. Danton is already among them, and has published this address.

He gave me the placard. It was brief and bold.

"Citizens—The country is betrayed. France is in the hands of her enemies. The Austrians are advancing. Our troops are retreating, and Paris must be defended by her brave sons alone. But, we have traitors in the camp. Our legislators are their accomplices; and La Fayette, the slave of kings, has been

suffered to escape—the nation must be avenged. The perfidious Louis is about to follow his example and fly, after having devoted the capital to conflagration. Delay a moment, and you will have to fight by the flames of your houses, and to bleed over the ashes of your wives and children. March, and victory is yours. To arms! To arms!! To arms!!!"

"Does Danton lead the insurrection?" was my first enquiry.

"No—for two reasons: he is an incendiary, but no soldier; and they cannot trust him, in case of success. A secret meeting of the heads of the party was held two days since, to decide on a leader for the sections. It was difficult, and had nearly been finished by the dagger. Billaud de Varennes, Vauquelin, St. Angely, and Danton, were successively proposed. But Robespierre objected to them all. At length an old German refugee, a beggar, but a soldier, was fixed on; and Westerman is to take the command.—By one o'clock the tocsin is to be rung, and the insurgents are instantly to move from all points on the Tuileries."

"What is their object?"

"The seizure, or death, of the King and Royal Family!"

"And the result of that object?"

"The proclamation of a Republic!"

"Is this known at the palace?"

"Not a syllable. All there are in perfect security;—to communicate intelligence there, is not in my department."

As I looked at the keen eye and dark physiognomy

of my informant, there was an expression of surprise in mine at this extraordinary coolness, which saved me the trouble of asking the question.

"You doubt me," said he. "But, I have been ordered by Mordecai, the chief of our tribe in England, to watch over you; and my information is a part of my obedience to the command." He suddenly darted away.

Notwithstanding the steadiness of his assertions, I still doubted their probability; and, to examine the point for myself, I strayed towards the palace. All there was tranquil; a few lights were scattered through the galleries; but every sound of life, much less of watchfulness and preparation, was still. The only human beings in sight were some dismounted cavalry, and a battalion of the national guard, lounging about the square. As I found it impossible to think of rest, until the truth or falsehood of my information was decided, I next wandered along the Boulevard, in the direction of the Faubourg St. Antoine, the focus of all the tumults of Paris. But all along this fine avenue was as hushed as if a general slumber had fallen over the city. The night was calm, and the air was a delicious substitute for the hot and reeking atmosphere of this populous quarter in the day. I could observe no sign of movement, no gathering of the populace; all lay silent beneath the young moon, which, near her setting, touched the whole scene with a look of soft and almost melancholy quietude.

The sagacity of my Israelite friend began to fall rapidly in the scale, and I had made up my mind,

that insurrection had gone to its slumbers for the night; when, as I was returning by the *Place de Bastile*, and was passing under the shadow of one of the huge old houses which still surrounded that scene of hereditary terror, two men suddenly started forward, and planted themselves in my way. I flung one of them aside, but the other grasped my arm, and, drawing a dagger, told me, that my life was at his mercy. His companion giving a signal, a group of fierce-looking fellows started from their lurking-places; and I was ordered to follow them. Regarding myself as having nothing to fear, yet uneasy at the idea of compulsion, I remonstrated, but in vain; and was finally led through a labyrinth of horrid alleys, to what I now found to be the head-quarters of the insurrection.

It was an immense building, which had probably been a manufactory, but was now filled with the arms and leaders of the mob. The few torches which were its only light, and which scarcely showed the height and extent of the building, were, however, enough to show heaps of weapons of every kind; muskets, sabres, pikes, and even pitchforks and scythes, on the floor. On one side, raised on a sort of desk, was a ruffianly figure, flinging placards to the crowd below, and often adding some savage comment on their meaning, which produced a general laugh. Flags inscribed with "Liberty—Bread or Blood—Down with the Tyrant"—and that comprehensive, and peculiarly favourite, motto of the mob—"May the last of the kings be strangled with the entrails of the last of the priests," were hung from the walls; and in the centre of the

floor were ranged several pieces of artillery, surrounded by their gunners. I now fully acknowledged the exactness of Mendoza's information; and began to feel considerable uncertainty about my own fate, in the midst of a horde of armed ruffians, who came pouring in more thickly every moment, and seemed to grow continually more ferocious. At length I was ordered to go forward to a sort of platform at the head of the hall, where some candles were still burning, and the remnants of a supper gave signs, that there had been grouped the chief persons of this tremendous assemblage. A brief interrogatory from one of them, armed to the teeth, and with a red cap so low down on his bushy brows as almost wholly to disguise his physiognomy, demanded my name, my business in Paris, and especially what I had to allege, against my being shot as a spy in the pay of the Tuileries? My answers were drowned in the roar of the multitude. Still, I protested firmly against this summary trial, and at length threatened them with the vengeance of my country. This might be heroic, but it was evidently injudicious. Patriotism is a fiery affair, and a circle of pistols and daggers ready for action, waited but the signal from the enquirer. He rose with some solemnity, and taking off his cap, to give the ceremonial a more authentic aspect; declared me to have "forfeited the right to live, by acting the part of an *espion*," and ordered me to be shot in "front of the battalion of the army of vengeance."

The decree was so unexpected, that, for the instant, the sight left my eyes, my ears tingled with strange sounds, and I almost felt as if I had received the

shots of the ruffians; who now, uncontrollable in their first triumph, were firing their pistols in all quarters in the air. But, at this moment, so formidable to my future career, I heard the clock of Nôtre Dame. I felt a sudden return of my powers and recollections. The sound of the signal for their march produced a rush of the crowd towards the gate: I took advantage of the confusion, struck down one of my captors, shook off the other, and plunged into the living torrent now pouring and struggling before me.

Yet, even when I had reached the open air, I was still in the midst of the multitude, and any attempt to make my way alone would have obviously been death. Thus was I carried on, along the Boulevard, in the heart of a column of a hundred thousand maniacs; trampled, driven, hustled by the rabble, and deafened with shouts, yells, and cries of vengeance; until my frame was in a fever, and my brain in scarcely less than a frenzy.

That terrible morning gave the death-blow to the mighty monarchy of the Bourbons! The throne was already so shaken by the popular arm, that, though it still preserved a semblance of its original shape, a touch was sufficient to cast it to the ground. I have no heart for the recital. Even now, I can scarcely think of that tremendous pageant of popular fantasy, fury, and the very passion of crime; or bring to my mind's eye that column, which seemed then to be endless,—with the glare of its torches, the rattle of its drums, and the grinding of its cannon-wheels, as we rushed along the causeway, from time to time stopping to fire; or the perpetual, sullen, and deep roar of the

populace—without a thrilling sense of perplexity and pain.

Long before daybreak, they had swept all minor resistance before them, plundered the arsenal of its arms, and taken possession of the Hôtel de Ville. The few troops at the different posts on our way, had been captured without an effort, or had joined the insurgents. But the adverse intelligence now came, that the palace was roused at last, that troops were ordered from the country for its defence, and that the noblesse were crowding to the Tuileries. I stood beside Danton, when those tidings were brought to him. He flung up his cap in the air, with a burst of laughter. "So much the better!" he exclaimed; "the closer the preserve, the thicker the game." I had now my first view of this hero of democracy. His figure was herculean; his countenance, which possibly, in his younger days, had been handsome, was now marked with the lines of every passion and profligacy, but it was still commanding. His costume was one which he had chosen for himself, and which was worn by his peculiar troop; a short brown mantle, an under-robe with the arms naked to the shoulder, a broad leathern belt loaded with pistols, a huge sabre in his hand, rusted from hilt to point, which he declared to have been stained with the blood of aristocrats; and the republican red cap, which he frequently waved in the air, or lifted on the point of his sabre as a standard. Yet, in the midst of all this savage disorder of costume, I observed every hair of his enormous whiskers to be curled with the care of a Parisian *merveilleux*. It was the most curious specimen of the ruling pas-

sion that I remember to have seen, even in the city of coxcombry.

At the Hôtel de Ville, Danton entered the hall with several of the insurgent leaders; and the crowd, unwilling to waste time, began to fire at the little statues and insignia of the French kings, which ornamented this old building. When this amusement palled—the French are easily *ennuied*—they formed circles, and danced the Carmagnole. Rum and brandy, largely supplied, gave them animation after their night's watching, and they were now fit for any atrocity. But the beating of drums, and a rush to the balconies of the Hôtel de Ville, told us that something of importance was at hand; and, in the midst of a group of municipal officers, Petion, the mayor of Paris, arrived. No man in France wore a milder visage, or hid a blacker heart under it. He was received with shouts; and, after a show of resistance, just sufficient to confirm his character for hypocrisy, suffered himself to be led to the front of the grand balcony, bowing, as the man of the people. Another followed, once a prodigious patriot, who had been placed at the head of the National Guard for his popular sycophancy, but who, on being called on by the mob to swear "death to the King," and hesitating,—felt the penalty of being unprepared to go all lengths. I saw his throat cut, and his body flung from the balcony. A cannon-shot now gave the signal for the march, and we advanced to the grand prize of the day. I can describe but little more of the assault on the Tuileries, than that it was a scene of desperate confusion on both sides.—The front of the palace, continually covered

with the smoke of fire-arms from all the casements; and the front of the mob, a similar cloud of smoke, under which men fired, fled, got drunk, danced, and died! Nothing could be more ferocious, or more feeble. Some of the Sections utterly ran away, on the first fire; but, as they were unpursued, they returned by degrees, and joined the fray. It may be presumed, that I made many an effort to escape; but I was in the midst of a battalion of the Faubourg St. Antoine; I had already been suspected, from having dropped several muskets in succession, thrust into my hands by the zeal of my begrimed comrades; and a slight sabre-cut, which I received from one of our mounted ruffians, as he saw me stepping to the rear, warned me that my time was not yet come, to get rid of this scene of revolt and bloodshed.

At length, the struggle drew to a close. A rumour spread, "that the king had left the palace, and gone to the Assembly." The cry arose, on all sides—"Advance, the day is our own!" The whole multitude now pushed forward, clashing their pikes and muskets, and firing their cannon, which were worked by deserters from the royal troops; the Marseillais, a band of the most desperate-looking ruffians that eye was ever set upon, chiefly galley-slaves and the profligate banditti of a sea-port, led the column of assault; and the sudden and extraordinary cessation of the fire from the palace windows, seemed to promise an easy conquest.

But, as the smoke subsided, I saw a long line of troops, drawn up in front of the principal entrance. Their scarlet uniforms showed that they were the

Swiss. The gendarmerie, the National Guard, the regular battalions, had abandoned them, and their fate seemed inevitable. But there they stood, firm as iron. Their assailants recoiled; but the discharge of some cannon-shots, which told upon the ranks of those brave and unfortunate men, gave them new courage, and they poured onward. The voice of the Swiss commandant, giving the word to fire, was now heard, and it was followed by a rolling discharge, from flank to flank, of the whole battalion. It was my first experience of the effect of fire; and I was astonished at its precision, rapidity, and deadly effect. In an instant, almost the whole troop of the Marseillais, in our front, were stretched upon the ground, and every third man in the first line of the Sections was killed or wounded. Before this shock could be recovered, we heard the word "fire" again from the Swiss, and a second shower of bullets burst upon our ranks. The Sections turned, and fled in all directions, some by the Pont Neuf, some by the Place Carrousel. The rout was complete; the terror, the confusion, and the yelling of the wounded, were horrible. The havoc was increased by a party of the defenders of the palace, who rushed down into the court and fell with desperation on the fugitives. I felt that now was my time to escape, and I darted behind one of the buttresses of a royal *porte cochère*, to let the crowd pass me. The skirmishing continued at intervals, and an officer in the uniform of the Royal Guard was struck down by a shot, close to my feet. As he rolled over, I recognized his features. He was Lafontaine! With an inconceivable shudder,

I looked on his pale countenance; and, with the thought that he was killed, was mingled the thought of the misery, which the tidings would bring to fond memories in England. But, as I drew the body within the shelter of the gate, I found that he still breathed; he opened his eyes, and I had the happiness, after waiting in suspense, till the dusk, of conveying him to my hotel.

Of the remaining events of this most calamitous day, I know but what all the world knows.—It broke down the monarchy. It was the last struggle, in which a possibility existed, of saving the throne. The gentlest of the Bourbons was now within sight of the scaffold. He had now only to sustain his character for personal virtue, by laying down his head patiently under the blade of the guillotine. His sceptre was gone, beyond hope, and all thenceforth was to be the trial of the legislature and the nation. That trial, too, was to be immediate, comprehensive, and condign. No people in the history of rebellion ever suffered, so keenly or so rapidly as the French, the vengeance which belongs to national crimes. The saturnalia was followed by massacre. A new and darker spirit of ferocity displayed itself, in a darker and more degraded form, from hour to hour, until the democracy itself was extinguished. Like the Scripture miracle of the demoniac—the spirits which had once exhibited their evil, in the shape of man, were transmitted into the shape of the brute; and even the swine ran down by instinct, and perished in the waters.

CHAPTER XIII.

" 'Tis hard, that thou shouldst reap in tears
And glean the ghastly harvest in,
Sown by thy godless sires through years
Of profligacy, blood, and sin—
Yet, had he ne'er been wretched, he
Had missed the glorious light that clings
Around his mournful memory,
Dimming the fame of happier kings."

SIMMONS.

MY first questions to Lafontaine, when I had his wound looked to, were for those whom he had left in England.

"Ah, ha!" said he with a laugh, which showed the inextinguishable Frenchman, "are you constant still? Well, then, Madame la Comtesse is constant too; but it is to her boudoir, or the gaieties of H—— House, or perhaps to her abhorrence of Monsieur le Mari."

"Le Mari!" I repeated the words, with an involuntary start.

"Bah! 'tis all the same. She is affianced, and among us that tie is quite as fixed as marriage, and, our libellers say, a little stronger. But, they cer-

tainly are *not* married yet, for Mademoiselle Clotilde either is, or affects, the invalid; and, considering the probability that she detests the man and the match; I think, on the whole, that she acts diplomatically, in informing the vainest colonel, in or out of France, that she is sick of any thing, rather than of him."

"But your Mariamne—how go on your interests there?" The question brought a smile and a sigh together, before he could find an answer.

"How she is, what she is doing, or even what she is, are matters that I can no more answer, than I can, why the wind blows. She torments me, and takes delight in tormenting me. I have been on the point of throwing up my commission, a hundred times since I saw you; and flying to America, or the world's end.—She controls me in every thing, insists on knowing all my movements, from hour to hour; finds them out when I attempt to conceal them even as a matter of duty; tortures me for the concealment, and then laughs at me for the confession.—She is intolerable."

"And yet you have obtained a lengthening of your chain, or how come here? How long have you been in Paris?"

"Just two days; and busy ones, or I should have found you out before. Yes, I had Mariamne's full permission to come; though, to this moment, I cannot account for the change. I had received a sudden order from Montrecour, who is deep in the emigrant affairs; to set out with letters which could not be sent by a courier. But I dared not leave London, without asking *her* permission; and, I acknowledge,

asking her, at the same time, to run away with me, and give herself a lawful title to be my tyrant for life. Applying to Mordecai was out of the question. Her answer was immediate; contemptuous in the extreme as to my proposal, yet almost urgent on me to accept the mission, and lose no time between London and Paris. Her postscript was the strangest part of all.—It was a grave recommendation to discover *you*, in whatever height or depth of the capital you might exist; whether you figured in the court or the cloister; whether you were the idol of the maids of honour, or the model of the monks of La Trappe.—I was also to remind you, that you had forgotten every body on the other side of the Channel, who was worth remembering, including herself; and commending *me*, as a truant and a trifler, to your 'especial, grave, and experienced protection.' Apropos! She sent me a letter, to be delivered with my own hands.—But for yourself, it had nearly failed in the delivery."

He gave me the letter. It was, like the writer, a pretty *mélange*;—trifles gracefully expressed; strong sense expressed like trifles; feeling carried off with a laugh; and palpable and fond anxiety for Lafontaine, couched in the most merciless badinage. While I gave this missive a second, and even a third perusal—for it finished with some gentle mention of the being, whose name was a charm to my wearied spirit—my eyes accidentally fell on Lafontaine. His were fixed on me, with an expression of inconceivable distress. At length his generous nature broke forth.

"Marston, if I were capable of jealousy, I should

be jealous of *you*, and of Mariamne. What *can* be the caprice which dictated that letter? what *can* be the interest which you evidently take in it? I wish that the bullet which laid me at your door this evening, had finished its work, and put an end to an existence which has been a perpetual fever. I shall not ask *what* Mariamne has said to you—but *I* am miserable."

"Yes, but you *shall* ask, and shall have all you ask," said I, giving him the letter. "It is the language of the heart, and of a heart strongly attached to *you*. I can see affection in every line of it.—Of course, she mingles a little coquetry with her sentiment; but was there ever a pretty woman, who was not more or less a coquette? She is a gem: never think it the less pure, because it sparkles.—Rely upon your little Mariamne."

"Then *you* have no sincere regard for her—no wish to interfere with my claims?" said my pallid friend, dubiously extending his hand towards me.

"Lafontaine, listen to me, and for the last time on the subject.—I *have* a very sincere regard for her." (My sensitive auditor started.) "But, I have also a perfect respect for your claims. It is impossible not to acknowledge the animated graces of her, on whom you have fixed your affections. But mine are fixed, where I have neither hope to sustain them, nor power to change.—Those matters have nothing to do with choice. They are effects without a cause, judgments without a reason, influences without an impulse—the problems of our nature, without a solution, since the beginning of the world."

"But, Marston, you will only laugh at me for all my anxieties."

"Lafontaine, I shall do no such thing. Those pains and penalties have been the lot of the noblest hearts and most powerful minds that the earth has ever seen; and have been most keenly felt by the noblest and the most powerful. The poet only tells the truth more gracefully, when he says—

> "'The spell of all spells, that enamours the heart,
> To few is imparted, to millions denied;
> 'Tis the brain of the victim, that poisons the dart,
> And fools jest at that, by which sages have died.'

"But, my friend, let us talk of other things.—We must not sink into a pair of sentimentalists; these are terrible times. Tell me what brought you out of quiet England among our madmen here."

"I may now tell all the world," was the reply, "for the evil is done, beyond remedy.—I was sent by our friends in London, to carry the last warning to the royal family, of all that has happened on this dreadful day. My papers contained the most exact details, the names of the leaders, their objects, their hour of assembling, and even their points of attack. Those were furnished, as you may conceive, by one of the principal conspirators; a fellow whom I afterwards actually saw on horseback in front of the Tuileries, and whom, I think, I had the satisfaction of dismounting by a shot from my carbine."

I mentioned the fruitlessness of my own efforts to awake the ministry.

"Ah," said he, with a melancholy smile, "my friend, if you had been admitted into the palace, or

into the council-chamber itself, you would have had precisely the same tale to tell. All was infatuation. I was ushered into the council last night. My despatches were read. I was complimented on my zeal, and then was told—'that every thing was provided for.' I was even closeted for two hours with the two individuals who, of all France, or of all mankind, had the largest stake in the crisis; and was again told, that there was no crisis to be feared. I offered to take a squadron of dragoons, and arrest the conspirators at the moment, with my own hand. I saw the eyes of the noblest of women fill with tears of grief and indignation at the hopelessness of my appeal, and the weakness of the romantic answer,—'that though Frenchmen might hate their ministers, they always loved their king.' I saw that all was over."

"Still," said I, "I cannot comprehend how the mere mob of Paris could have succeeded against the defenders of the palace."

"If you had seen it as I did; the only wonder is, how the Tuileries held out so long. After passing a night on guard at the Pavilion de Flore, I was summoned at daybreak, to attend his majesty. What a Staff for a monarch on the eve of a civil war!—The queen, endeavouring to support the appearance of calmness; Madame Elizabeth, that human angel, following her, dissolved in tears; the two royal children, weeping and frightened, making their way through the crowd of nobles, guardsmen, domestics who had gathered promiscuously in the chambers and corridors, armed with whatever weapons they could find; and all in confusion.—From the windows there

was another scene; and the only moment when I saw the queen shudder, was when she cast her eye across the Place du Carrousel, and saw it covered with the masses of the multitude, drawn up in battle-array. A more gloomy sight never met the eye. From time to time, the distant discharge of cannon was heard, giving us the idea that some treachery was transacting in the remoter parts of the city, every discharge, answered by a roar of—'Down with the King'—'Death to Marie Antoinette'—'The lamp-iron to traitors.'—As I glanced on those round me, I saw despair in every countenance; the resolution, perhaps, to die, but the evident belief that their death must be in vain.—You now know all."

I expressed my strong sympathy with the sufferings of the royal family and their defenders within the palace.

"Marston, I cannot think of them. I cannot speak of them. I see nothing but a vision of blood, shame, folly, and wretchedness.—There never was a cause more fatally abandoned. Every thing that could be done to ruin a monarchy, was done. I was standing beside the royal group, when a deputation from the National Assembly made its appearance. At its head was a meagre villain, whom one might have taken for the public executioner. He came up, cringing and bowing, to the unfortunate king; but, with a look which visibly said—'We have you in our power.' I could have plunged my sword in the triumphant villain's heart. I had even instinctively half drawn it, when I felt the pressure of a gentle hand on mine. It was the queen's. 'Remember the king's presence. We must owe nothing to violence,' were her words.

And at that instant she looked so heart-broken, yet so noble, that I could have worshipped her. The deputation next pressed the necessity of 'taking shelter,' as they phrased it, 'in the bosom of the faithful Assembly.' The words, 'assembly of traitors,' burst from my lips. A shout of approbation arose on all sides. But I was more rewarded, by a sorrowing smile from the queen. She was indignant at the proposal. 'No; never shall I leave this spot, but by the king's command!' she exclaimed. 'I would rather be chained to the walls.' As the guard closed round her at the words, she suddenly stopped, took a pistol from one of the Garde du Corps, and forcing it on the king, 'Now, said the heroine, 'now is the time to show yourself a king of France!'—An universal cry of enthusiasm arose, and hundreds of swords were brandished in the air. The deputation now, probably expecting to be massacred, made an effort to reach the door, and the monarchy was on the point of being saved; when the leader of the party glanced back at the royal circle. There stood unfortunate Louis, hesitating, with the pistol in his hand. On such moments all depends. The villain crept up to the king, and whispered in his ear, 'Would you see all your family put to death? In the Assembly all are safe.' 'Well, then, we shall go,' was the simple answer. He might well have added—'To the scaffold.' The queen pressed her hands on her eyes, and wept bitterly. All were silent. In a few minutes more, our sad procession was crossing the garden to the door of the Assembly; amid a roar, which could not have been fiercer or more triumphant, had we

been going to execution." His tongue faltered; his gallant heart heaved, and tears burst from his eyes. I am not sure that I did not follow them with mine.

It was now near midnight; the fine summer's day, as if it had been dimmed by the desperate scenes of which it was witness, had set in sudden clouds; and the distant shoutings of the populace seemed to be answered by the voice of a storm. Lafontaine's wound began to bleed afresh by the agitation of his story; and to find medical assistance, was now my first object. Having seen him conveyed to my bed, and leaving him in charge of my valet, I hastened towards the residence of the physician to the embassy. In doing this, I had to cross the Rue St. Honoré. But there my course was stopped.—I shrink from alluding to those horrid scenes and times. The scene which there met my eyes has scarcely left them since.

The populace were returning from the conquest and plunder of the palace, to the Palais Royal, the head-quarters of all convulsion; and they had arranged their ranks into something like a triumphal procession on the stage. The dead bodies of the brave Swiss were carried, as trophies, on boards or biers, preceded by the revolutionary banners; the plundered ornaments of the Tuileries were borne on the heads of men; the horses from the royal stables, caparisoned for the occasion, drew hearses, in which the bodies of the mob who had fallen, were laid. Brief as the time for decoration had been, wreaths of artificial flowers, taken from the shops of the *marchandes de modes*, and theatrical shawls and mantles, from the stores of the *fripiers*, covered the hearses; and the whole, sur-

rounded and followed by a forest of pikes and bayonets, plumes and flags, was displayed by the lurid and shifting blaze of thousands of torches tossing in the wild and howling wind.

The train seemed countless. Shocked and sickened, I had made repeated efforts to cross the column, but was as repeatedly driven back. If all the dead criminality of Paris had risen, to join all the living, it could scarcely have increased my astonishment at the thousands, which continued to pour on before me; nor, scarcely, if the procession had started from the grave, could it have looked more strange, squalid, and startling. In the rear came the cannon, which had achieved this melancholy victory. And they, again, were sometimes converted into carriages for the dead, sometimes for the plunder, and, in every instance, were surmounted by women, female furies, drinking, shouting, and uttering cries of unspeakable savageness and blasphemy against priests, nobles, and kings; and, mingled with all this, were chorusses of bacchanal songs, accompanied with shouts of laughter. My anxiety for my unfortunate friend, at last urged me to make a desperate attempt to force my way through the mass of pikes and daggers. After being swept far along with the stream, I reached the street in which the physician lived. He set out with me immediately; and, by his superior knowledge of the route, we were enabled to make our way unimpeded, through streets, that looked like dens of robbers, to my hotel.

But, there, a new and still more alarming disappointment awaited me. I found the *Suisse* and all

the attendants of the establishment, gathered on the stairs in terror.—Lafontaine was gone! Whether, frenzied by the insults and yells of the populace, who continued to pass in troops from time to time; or in doubt of my safety, he had started from his bed, put on his sword, and rushed into the street; without the possibility of being restrained, and without uttering a word of explanation.

Exhausted as I was by fatigue, and still more by the sights and scenes through which I had just passed, this intelligence was peculiarly painful. The fate of a young enthusiast, and a foreigner; whom I had known but so lately, and of whom I knew so little; might not have justified much personal sacrifice. But, the thought of the heart that would be broken by his falling into the hands of the barbarians, who were now masters of every thing, smote keenly upon me. Mariamne would die; and though I was by no means a lover of Mariamne, yet, where I had seen so much that was loveable, I might fairly feel a regard, next in degree. There may, and there does often, exist the tenderness of love, without the flame. I could have looked on this pretty and animated creature as the wife of Lafontaine, or of any other object of her choice, without the slightest pang; but I could not have looked upon her, pining away in hopelessness, wasting in silent sorrow, or with her gay and gentle existence clouded by a loss which nothing could repair, without thinking every effort of mine to avert the evil from her, due, on every principle of common feeling.

While I pondered, a note was brought to me,

written by Lafontaine, before he had sallied from his chamber, and evidently written under the wildest emotion. It told me, in a few scarcely legible words, "that he felt life a burden to him, and thanked Heaven for the opportunity now offered of dying for his king and the glory of France.—That the monarchy had perished, beyond redemption. But that, though the royal family were surrounded by the poniards of assassins, it was his determination to follow and find them, to rescue them, or die at their feet." This strange production closed with—"You shall hear of me within twenty-four hours, living or dead. If I fall, remember me to my affianced wife; and vindicate my character to the world."

This was so like insanity, that it perplexed me more and more; but, on second thoughts, it appeared to offer some clue to me in his pursuit.—He had gone to die in the presence of the royal family. If they were to be found by him at all, they must be found in the Assembly. I immediately hurried to the garden of the Tuileries, where they met, until their new legislative palace should be erected. The multitude had now partially retired, for it was towards morning; and the entrance was comparatively clear. A strong force of the National Guard still kept the drunken rabble at a distance; and the five franc piece, with which I tempted the incorruptibility of a peculiarly ferocious-looking patriot; admitted me without delay.

What a scene there presented itself to my eyes! The "Salle" was large and showy; and when I had attended it, in former debates, it exhibited the taste

and skill which the French, more than any other people on earth, exhibit in temporary things. Nothing could exceed the elegance with which the Parisian decorators had fitted up this silk and tinsel abode; which was to be superseded, within a few months, by the solid majesty of marble. But, on this memorable and melancholy night, the ornaments bore, to me, the look of those sad frivolities, with which France is fond of ornamenting her tombs. The chandeliers seemed to burn dim; the busts and statues looked ghost-like; the chief part of the members had thrown themselves drowsily on the benches; and the debate had languished into the murmurs of a speech, to which no one listened.—If the loaded table, with its pile of petitions and ordonnances, in the midst of the hall, could have been imagined a bier; the whole wore the aspect of a *chapelle ardente*. There, indeed, lay in state the monarchy of France. My unlucky friend, of course, was not there; but I saw, in a narrow box, on the right of the president, a group, from which, when once seen, I found it impossible to withdraw my gaze—the first and most exalted victims of the Revolution, the king and his family! All, but one, were apparently overcome with fatigue; for they had sat there fifteen hours. But that one sat, with a steady eye and an erect front, as if superior to all suffering.—I had seen Marie Antoinette, the most splendid figure, in all the splendours of her court.—I had seen her unshaken before vast popular assemblages, in which any rash or ruffian hand might have taken her life at the instant; but she now gave me an impression of a still higher order. Sitting in calm

resignation and unstained dignity, her stately form and countenance, pale and pure as marble, looked like some noble statue on a tomb;—or rather, sitting in that chamber of death, like some pure spirit, awaiting the summons, to ascend from the relics of human guilt, infirmity, and passion; and take her place in a region, where they were no more.

But the slumbers of the Assembly were soon to be broken. A tumult, and the trampling of many feet, was heard at the door. It was followed by the thunder of clubs and hammers breaking it in; the bars gave way; the huissiers and other attendants took refuge behind the chair of the president, in affright; and, with a roar which spoke the supremacy of the new power in France, the mob poured in. They announced themselves, as a deputation from the Municipality, and instantly took possession of the benches. Men, women, and even children, composed this barbarian invasion; like all whom I had seen, half intoxicated; but evidently trained by higher hands, for more determined evil. A chosen troop of orators, in Roman robes, probably plundered from some suburb theatre; moved forward to the table, and took their seats around it, with the solemnity of Conscript fathers. The chief speaker advanced, preceded by the head of one of the murdered Swiss on a pike, a hideous spectacle; and, drawing from his belt a dagger, commenced a furious harangue against every thing that bore the shape of authority in the kingdom. The Assembly itself did not escape in the general outpouring of his bitterness.—They were charged with want of zeal, with want of honesty, and, most formi-

dable of all, want of patriotism. I saw many a member cower at the word; for it was the countersign of Jacobinism; and the man, on whom that charge was personally fastened, was sure to fall by pistol or dagger. But the rage of the harangue was levelled at the royal family. "There sits the tyrant!" he exclaimed, pointing with his poniard to the meekest of monarchs and of men.—"The vengeance of the people calls for victims. How long shall it be insulted? If justice is blind, tear the bandage from her eyes.—How long shall the sword of the people rust in its sheath? Liberty sitting on her altar demands new sacrifices to feed its flame.—The blood of tyrants is the only incense worthy to be offered by a regenerated people!"

At every pause of those fierce interjections, the crowd burst into yells of applause, drew knives and daggers from their bosoms, flourished them in the air, and echoed the words. The Assembly were evidently in terror for their lives. The president made some faint attempts to restore order: a few of the members made faint attempts at speeches; but, the mob were masters; and a night of such horrors passed, as I had never dreamed of before. At daybreak, the orator demanded, that a decree should be passed, suspending the king, the ministry, and even the Assembly, in the midst of which he stood. Of all the extravagancies ever conceived—of all the insolences of power—of all the licences of popular licentiousness, his demand was the most daring, unrivalled, and unimagined; and yet this was carried, with scarcely a voice raised against it. The trembling

president, with the dagger before his eyes, put the motion for extinguishing the throne, the cabinet, and calling a new Assembly! From that hour the monarchy was no more.

During this tremendous discussion, I had not ventured to raise my eyes towards the royal family; but, as all were now about to retire, I dared a single glance. The king was slowly leaving the box, leading the dauphin by the hand; the Princess Elizabeth was carrying the sleeping dauphiness in her arms; the queen remained behind, alone, for a moment, sitting as she had done for hours, with her eyes fixed on vacancy; her countenance calm, but corpselike. At length, she seemed to recollect that she was alone, and suddenly started up. Then nature had its way; she tottered, and fainted. From that night forth, that glorious creature never saw the light of day, but through the bars of a prison. From the Feuillans, the royal family were consigned to the cells of the Temple, from which Louis and Marie Antoinette never emerged but to the grave!

That night taught me a lesson, which neither time nor circumstance has ever made me forget. It cured me of all my republican fantasies, at once, and for ever. I believe myself to be above the affectation of romantic sensibility. But it would have been equal affectation, to deny the feelings, to which that awful scene of human guilt and human suffering gave birth. If the memory of the popular atrocities made me almost abhor human nature; the memory of that innocent and illustrious woman restored my admiration of the noble qualities that may still be found in human na-

ture. "If I forget thee even in my mirth," the language of the Israelite to his beloved city, was mine, with scarcely a less solemn or sacred feeling. Let the hearts and eyes of others refuse to acknowledge such emotions. I am not ashamed to say, that I have shed many a tear over the fate of the King and Queen of France. In the finest fictions of genius, in the most touching poetry, I have never experienced so deep a sense of human misfortune; in the most high-wrought sorrows of the stage, I have never been so deeply touched. I never felt myself penetrated with such true and irresistible emotion, as in reading, many a year after, the simplest record of the last days of the unhappy Bourbons. What must it be to have witnessed the last agonies of their hearts and throne!

On returning to my chambers, shuddering and wretched, I found a despatch on my table. It was from Downing Street; an order, that within twelve hours after its receipt, I should set out from Paris, and make my way with the utmost secrecy, to the head-quarters of the Austrian and Prussian army; where further orders would be waiting for me.

This command threw me into new perplexity. It had been my purpose to find my unfortunate friend, if he was not already in the bosom of the Seine, or a victim to some of the popular violences. But my orders were peremptory. I, however, did all that was in my power. I spent the day in looking for him, through all the hotels and hospitals; and, after a hopeless search, gave my man of mystery, Mendoza, a commission, paid for at a rate that

made him open his hollow eyes wide, with incredulity, on the coin; to discover and protect him, wherever he was to be found.

But I had now another difficulty, which threatened to nip my diplomatic honours in the bud. The news had just arrived, that the allied armies had passed the frontier, and were sweeping all before them with fire and sword. A populace is always mad with courage, or mad with cowardice; and the Parisians, who, but yesterday, were ready to have made a march round the globe, now thought the wells and cellars of the city, not too deep or too dark to hold them. They would have formed a camp in the catacombs, if they could. All was sudden terror. The barriers were shut. Guards were posted tenfold at all the gates. Men were ranged on the heights round the city, to make signals of the first approach of the Prussian hussars; and the inhabitants spent half the day on every house-top that commanded a view of the country, waiting for the first glimpse of their devourers. To escape from this city of terror now became next to impossible. All my applications were powerless. The Government were themselves regarded as under lock and key; the populace, as if determined that all should share a common massacre, were clustered at the barriers, pike in hand, to put all "emigrants" to death; the ambassador was, as ambassadors generally are, in cases of real difficulty, a cipher; and yet I must leave Paris within twelve hours, or be cashiered.

It at length occurred to me, to avail myself of my

Jewish acquaintance, and I found him listening to a midnight harangue in the midst of a Jacobin crowd, in the Palais Royal. He considered the matter for a while; and I walked about, leaving him to his free invention, while I contrasted the brilliant blaze of the gaming and dancing rooms above me, with the assassin-like darkness of the galleries below. At length, he turned to me. "There is but one way. Have you any objection to be arrested?"

"The greatest imaginable," was my answer.

"Just as you please," he replied; "but I have here an order for the seizure of one of the emigrant agents, a Chevalier Lafontaine, lately arrived in Paris. He has been seen in the Palace, but we have missed him for the last twelve hours. The order is for Vincennes. Will you take his place?"

I naturally looked all surprise, and peremptorily refused.

"Do as you will," said my intractable adviser, "but there is no other way to pass the gates. I shall take you to Vincennes as a state prisoner; I have influence there. In short, if you trust me, you shall be safe, and on your road by daybreak. If you do not, here your life is uncertain: you are known—watched; and the first order that I receive to-morrow, may be one for your apprehension."

All this was likely enough: there was but a moment to deliberate, and I got into the first cabriolet, and drove with him to the barrier. The streets still exhibited scattered bands, who questioned us from time to time; but the words, "By order of the Municipality," which were enough to terrify the stoutest

hearts, and the display of his badge, carried us through. We passed the guard at the gate, after a slight examination of the order, and galloped to Vincennes.

At the sight of the frowning fortress, my blood chilled, and I refused to go further. "In that case," said my conductor, "I am compromised, and you are ruined; the first patrol will seize you, while I shall be shot. I pledge myself, that here you shall not remain; but I must be acquitted to the head of the police. You shall be M. le Chevalier Lafontaine, for the night; and if such a man exists, you will probably be the means of saving his life. To-morrow I shall bring proofs of my mistake, and then you will be outside the walls of Paris, and free to go where you please."

The name of Lafontaine decided me. Even the risk seemed less serious than before, and we drove over the drawbridge. The interior of the fortress formed a striking contrast to the scenes which I had just left behind me. All was still, stern, and noiseless. "Give me your papers," said Mendoza, "they will be safer in my hands than yours."

I had but time to give him my despatch, as we passed through the court, which led to the governor's apartments. I was searched in the presence of that important functionary, a meagre old captain of invalids, who had been roused from his bed, and was evidently half asleep. I stoutly denied my being the criminal who had offended the "majesty of the people." But as the governor himself, on gazing at me with his purblind eyes, was perfectly satisfied of my identity, there was no use in contesting the point. A

couple of sentinels were placed at the door of my cell, and I was left, like himself, to my slumbers. Before the door closed, I grasped my guide by the throat. The thought that I had been entrapped actually agonized me.

"Am I betrayed?" I asked, in a whisper of fury.

The only answer was, "Mordecai."

I felt security in the word, and, without a further pang, heard his tread echoing along the distant corridor.

Time rolls on, whether we are happy or miserable. Morning came, and found me feverish from a thousand dreams. Noon came, and my impatience grew with the hour. Evening came, and yet no symptom of my liberation. If "hope deferred maketh the heart sick," confidence duped, and blindly, weakly, rashly duped, turns to torture.

Why trust a known agent of the police? Why put my liberty into his hands? Why, above all, make him master of my papers? I was overwhelmed with shame, I writhed with remorse. As hour after hour dragged its slow length along, I sank from dejection to dejection, or burst from rage to rage. But at last, when the drums of the garrison were making their final flourish for the night, the key turned in the door of my cell, and the Jew entered. I almost sprang upon him; and his life would have been worth little, but for the words,—"You may now leave the fortress."

He told me further, that my absence was fortunate, for a domiciliary visit had been paid to my apartments by direction of the municipality, my

trunks examined, and my doors sealed. My absence was imputed to flight; and as jails were then the only safe residences in France, I had escaped actual imprisonment simply by my volunteer detention; to watch the event, had been the source of his delay. All was speedily settled with the old commandant, who was now, as perfectly "convinced on his own knowledge," that I was not the chevalier, as he had been convinced on the night before that I was. Mendoza's proofs were registered in due form; and with unspeakable delight, I once again mounted his cabriolet, and heard the chains of the drawbridge rattle behind me.

My Jew had been true to his pledge. I found horses provided for me at a lonely cabaret, a league off. With the minute foresight which men of his trade learn, he had provided for me a couple of disguises—the garb of a peasant, which I was to use when I passed among the soldiery; and the uniform of an aide-de-camp, with which I was to keep down inquiries when I came among the peasantry. But I was weary of disguise. It had never thriven with my temperament. I was determined, at all events, now to trust to chance, and my proper person; and if I must fail, have the satisfaction of failing after my own style. The only recompense which my magnanimous police officer would receive, was a promise that I should mention his conduct to Mordecai; and gathering up his rejected wardrobe, he departed.

Fortunately I found disguises unnecessary, though at any other time, they might have been essential. The country was all in a state of flight, and every

man was too much employed, in securing himself, to think of laying hold of others. Thus galloped I through hill and dale, through bush and briar, unquestioned, and almost unseen; until on the evening of the fourth day, as I plunged into a forest, which for the last half hour I had been imagining into a scene of fairyland, a bower where a pilgrim might finish his journey for life, or a man "crazed by care, or crossed in hopeless love," might forget woman and woe together—I was awakened to the realities of things, by the whistle of a bullet, which struck off a branch within an inch of my head, followed by a fierce howl, for the "countersign." By all the laws of war, the howl should have come first; but these were not times for ceremony. A troop of Hulans poured round me, sabre in hand. I stood like a stoic; and, of course, attempted to tell who I was. But my German was unintelligible to my captors, and my French, a suspicious language on a Prussian outpost, only confirmed their opinion, that I was born to be stripped. Accordingly one demanded my watch, another my purse, and I was in a fair way of entering the Prussian lines in a state of pauperism, or of being "left alone in my glory" by shot or sabre; when an officer rode up, whom I had casually known in some Parisian circle. To him I could explain myself, and to him I exhibited the envelope of my letter, inscribed with the words, "Grand Quartier General." My new friend bowed to this awful address, like a Turk to the firman of the padisha, yawned out a volley of wrath on the troop, ordered the instant and very reluctant restitu-

tion of my property, and, with a couple of the squadron at our heels, took me under his escort, to deliver my papers in person.

After a wild gallop through rocks, rivulets, and brambles, which seemed without end, and totally uninhabited, except by an occasional patrol of the irregulars of the Austrian and Prussian forces—barbarians as savage-looking as ever were Goth or Hun, and capital substitutes for the wolves and wild-boars which they had ejected for the time;—a sudden opening of the forest brought us within view of the immense camp of the combined armies.

All the externals of war are splendid; it is the interior, the consequences, the operation of that mighty trampler of man, that are startling. This was my first sight of that most magnificent of all the atrocious inventions of human evil—an army. The forces of the two most warlike monarchies of Europe were now spread before me; nearly a hundred and fifty thousand troops, with all the numberless followers of a host in the field, covering a range of low hills which encircled the horizon. While we were still at a considerable distance, a gun was fired from the central hill, answered by others from the flanks. The rolling of drums set the vast line in motion, and just at the moment when the sun was lying on the edge of the west, the brigades, descending each from its height, halted on the slope. The whole vast manœuvre was executed with the exactness of a machine. The blaze of the sun on the arms, on the standards, and the tents crowning the brow of the hills, was magical. "Are they marching to battle?"

was my amazed question to my companion. His only answer was, to check his charger, take off his shako, and bend his forehead to his saddle-bow. A burst of universal harmony, richer than I had ever yet heard, explained the mystery. It was the evening prayer. The fine bands of the regiments joined the voices of the soldiery, and I listened, in unbroken rapture and reverence, until its close. In court or cathedral, in concert or shrine, I had never before so fully felt the power of sound. It finished in a solemn chorus, an accumulation of glorious harmonies. I could have almost imagined them ascending, embodied, to heaven.

The discharge of cannon announced the conclusion of the service; we put spurs to our horses, and entered the lines. On the strength of my credentials, I had distinguished quarters assigned to me.

CHAPTER XIV.

" Throw back the barriers—Marshal, see,
That high above that shout,
Herald and trumpet fearlessly
Ring our defiance out.
Long as this arm can lift a lance,
This hand a charger rein ;
When warriors throng and pennons dance,
Our glory we maintain.
Back with the barriers,—undismayed,
Ring forth our challenge wide :
God, and our glorious cause, to aid—
The battle we abide."

SIMMONS.

I now, for the first time since I left England, began to feel the advantages of birth. In London, every man is so submerged in the multitude, that he who can hold his head high enough above the living surge, to be known ; must have something of remarkable buoyancy, or peculiar villany, about him. Even Parliament, except to a few of the leaders, is no distinction. The member for the shire is clipped of all his plumage, at the moment of his entering that colossal poultry-yard, and must take his obscure pickings with other unnoticeable fowl. In Paris,

once the Mahometan paradise of stars and garters, once the central herald's office of the earth, the royal region of ancient aristocracy, where the beggar with a *cordon* on his breast, outshone the banker with millions in his pocket-book; the world was totally changed; and, to be the son or brother of a peer, might have been only a speedier passport to the lamp-post. But, in Germany, the land of pedigrees, to be an "honourable" was to be one on whom the sun shone with double beams; on whom the sex, young and old, smiled with double softness; and the whole host of "Serenities" were doubly serene. In camp, nothing could be more hospitable or more distinguished than my reception; for the soldier is always good-humoured under canvas, and the German is good-humoured everywhere. Perhaps, he has rather too high an opinion of his descent from Goth and Vandal, but he makes allowance for the more modern savagery of Europe; and although the stranger may neither wear spectacles, nor smoke cigars, neither muzzle his visage with moustaches, nor speak the most formidable tongue on earth, the German will good-naturedly admit,—that he may be a human being after all.

But, the man with whom my mission brought me most immediately into contact, and to whom I was most indebted for courtesy, would have been a remarkable personage in any country of Europe; that man was the Duke of Brunswick.

On my arrival, I found two letters forwarded from London, and in the hands of an aide-de-camp of the generalissimo. The first which I opened was from

the Foreign Office, a simple statement of the purpose for which I was sent — namely, to stimulate the activity of the Prussian councils, and to urge the commander of the army to an immediate movement on the French capital; with a postscript, directing me, in case of any tardiness being exhibited at head-quarters, instantly to transmit a despatch home, and return to my post in Paris. The second letter—which I must, however undiplomatically, admit, that I opened with much stronger interest — was from Mordecai. I glanced over it for some mention of the "one-loved name," and then bitterly laughed at my own folly, in expecting to find such communications in the letter of the hard-headed and busy Jew. All was brief and rapid.

"If this shall find you in the Prussian camp, you will have no more time for me, than I have for you. Let me not clip your diplomatic wings; but this I forewarn you—you will not obtain a single object of your journey; except, perhaps, that of showing that you can gallop a hundred miles in the four-and-twenty hours, and can make your way through a country of lunatics, without being piked or sabred.

"The campaign is over already—over before it has begun. The battle was fought in the council at Berlin, and the allies were beaten!—The duke, within the next fortnight, will be deciding on the merits of the ballet, in Brunswick; and the French will be madder than ever, with triumphs which they never won; preparing for conquests which are already gained; and knocking down thrones, the owners themselves supplying the pickaxes and ham-

mers.—*You* will see the two best armies of the Continent running away from their own shadows; the old councillors of Frederick and Maria Theresa baffled by cabinets of cobblers and tinkers; grey-beard generals, in spite of all their stars, hunted over the frontier by boys, girls, and old women; and France, like a *poissarde* in a passion, with her hair flying about her ears, her knife in hand, and her tongue in full swing, scampering half naked over Europe,—to the infinite wonder of the wearers of velvet, Mechlin lace, and diadems,—ha, ha, ha!"

While I was trying to decipher this riddle, which was rather too contemptuous for my new views of things; but which I referred to the habitual feelings of a strong-headed man in humble life, brought just close enough to higher, to feel his exclusion; an officer was announced as Count Vornhorst, on the staff of the duke. His countenance struck me at first sight, as one which I had seen before; and I soon discovered, that when I was a boy at Eton, he had been on a visit of a few days at Mortimer castle, in the suite of one of the Prussian princes. We were thus old friends, and we now became young ones, within the first quarter of an hour. His countenance was that of a humourist, and his recollections of the Great Frederick rendered him sarcastic on all things of the later generation.

"The duke has sent me to you," said he, "with his apologies for keeping you out of bed; but he has appointed midnight for the delivery of your despatches. The truth is, that hitherto we have all slept so soundly, that we must make up for lost time by

turning night into day now, just as we have turned day into night for the last twelvemonth."

"But, what can you tell me of the duke?"

"Oh! a great deal; but you know that I am on his staff, and therefore bound to keep his secrets."

"Yet, count, remember that we have sworn an eternal friendship, within the last five minutes. What can he or I be the worse for my knowing all his good qualities?"

"My dear young friend, when you are as old as I am, you will see the impropriety of such questions."

"Well, then, to come to the point; is he really *the* general?"

"He speaks French better than any other prince in Germany."

"What is he, as a politician?"

"You must see him on horseback; he rides like a centaur."

"Well, then, in one sentence, will he fight the French?"

"That wholly depends on, whether he turns his horse's head towards Paris or Berlin."

"My dear count, but one question more; which you may answer without a riddle. Do you think that he will receive my mission cordially?"

"He speaks your language; he wears your broad cloth; he loves your beer; and he has married one of your princesses." I laughed.

"All my difficulties are answered.—I am ready; but what shall I find him doing at this extraordinary hour?"

"If asleep, dreaming of the opera at Brunswick; if awake, dreaming of the opera at Paris."

His diamond repeater, which he had laid on the table between us, struck twelve as he spoke; and wrapping ourselves in our cloaks, we sallied forth into one of the most starry nights of autumn; and made our way, through long ranges of patrols and vedettes, to the quarters of the generalissimo.

The mansion was an old chateau, evidently long abandoned to loneliness and decay; one of those huge edifices, whose building had cost one fortune, and whose support had exhausted another. However, the struggle had been over for the last fifty years; and two or three shrivelled domestics remained, simply to keep out the invasion of the bats and owls. But, at this period the chateau exhibited, of course, another scene; aides-de-camp, generals, orderlies, couriers—all the clang and clamour of the staff of a great army—rang through the wild old halls, and echoed round the long, ghostly corridors. Every apartment was a blaze of light, and filled with *employés*, and officers of the Prussian and Austrian guards; all was billiard-playing, talking, singing in chorus, and carousing, in all the noisy gaiety of the soldier in good quarters.

"All this is tempting enough," said the gallant count, as we hastened along a gallery that seemed endless, but on which the open doors of the successive apartments threw broad illumination. "I dare say, Mr. Marston, that you would prefer taking your seat among those lively fellows, to the honour

of a ducal conference; but my orders are, that you must not be seen, until the duke gives you *carte blanche* to appear among human beings again."

The count now opened the door of an apartment, which appeared to have been more lately tenanted than the rest, yet which exhibited signs of its old desertion; —a marble table, covered with a decaying drapery, a stained alabaster of Niobe and her children, on the mantelpiece; a tarnished mirror, and a faded tapestry of one of the hunts of Henri Quatre, sufficiently showed that time had been there, and that the Prussians had not. But the indistinct light of the single chandelier left me slight opportunity of indulging my speculations on the furniture. The count had left me, to ascertain when the duke should be at leisure; and my immediate process was, like that of a good soldier, to reconnoitre the neighbouring territory. The first door which I opened led into a conservatory, filled with remnants of dead foliage, but, opening on the gardens of the chateau; which, wild as they now were, still sent up a fragrance doubly refreshing, after the atmosphere of meerschaums, hot brandy, and Rhine beer, which filled the galleries. The casement distantly overlooked the esplanade in front of the chateau; and the perpetual movements of the couriers and *estafettes*, arriving and departing in crowds, the galloping of escorts, and the march of patrols, occupied me, until a valet of the duke came to announce that supper was served, in the apartment which I had lately quitted.

I returned; and found the chamber which I had left so dark and dilapidated, changed, as if by

a fairy wand, into pomp and elegance. The duke was renowned for splendid extravagance; and the table was covered with gold plate, the walls glittered with a profusion of lamps, and all round me had the look of regal luxury. But, one object suddenly caught my gaze, which left me no power to glance at any other. In a recess, hitherto obscure, but over which now blazed a brilliant girandole, hung a full-length portrait of a nun; which, but for the dress, I should have pronounced to be Clotilde—the same Greek profile, the same deep yet vivid eye, the same matchless sweetness of smile, and the same mixture of melancholy and enthusiasm; which had made me think my idol fit to be the worship of the world. I stood wrapped in astonishment, in delight, pain, a thousand undefined feelings; until I could have almost imagined, that the canvas before me lived. I saw its eye all but glisten, its lips all but open to speak; the very marble of its cheek begin to glow; when I was awakened by a lively voice, saying, in French—"Ah, M. Marston, I perceive that you are a connoisseur." I turned to the speaker, and saw a man somewhat above the middle size; a remarkably noble-looking personage; in full dress even at that hour, powdered and perfumed, and altogether a court figure; his fingers loaded with rings, and a diamond star of the Garter on his breast. It required no introducer to tell me, that I was in the presence of the Duke of Brunswick.

"Come," said he, "we have no time for etiquette, nor indeed much for any thing else to-night—we must sup first, and then talk of your mission."

We sat down; a double file of valets, in liveries loaded with embroidery, attended at the table; though the party consisted of but four; Vornhorst, and a Colonel Guiscard, chief of the secret diplomacy, a pale Spanish-featured officer, to whom his highness did me the honour of introducing me, as the son of one of the stranger's friends; the duke and myself making up the number.

"You remember Marston," said he to Guiscard, "at Brunswick, five-and-twenty years ago, in his envoyship—a capital horseman, a brilliant dresser, and a very promising diplomatist. I augured well of his future career, but"—— the infinite elevation of the ducal shoulders, and the infinite drooping of the ducal eyes, completed the remainder of my unfortunate parent's history; but whether in panegyric or censure, I was not sufficiently versed in the science of saying nothing and implying all things, to tell. Guiscard fixed his deep dark eye on me, without a word; at that moment he reminded me exactly of one of the Inquisitors—the profound, dark-visaged men whom the matchless pencil of Velasquez has immortalized.

Vornhorst burst out into a laugh.

"What, Guiscard," said he, "are you reconnoitring the ground, before you make the attack? Your royal highness, I think we ought to vindicate our country to this English gentleman, by assuring him that the colonel is *not* a cardinal in disguise."

The colonel merely smiled, which seemed an effort for his cloistral physiognomy; the duke laughed, and began a conversation upon all possible topics—England forming the chief; the royal family—the court

—the theatres—parliament—the people—all whirled over, with the ease and rapidity of one turning the leaves of an album; here a verse and there a portrait —here a sketch of a temple, and there an outline of a cottage—the whole pretty, and as trifling as pretty, and cast aside, at the first moment when any thing better worth thinking of occurred.

In the midst of our gaiety, in which the duke had completely laid down his sceptre; the great clock of the chateau tolled One. The table was instantly swept of the supper; the valets withdrew. I heard the tread of a sentinel at the door of the apartment; and the duke, instantly changing from the man of fashion to the statesman, began to enter into the questions, then so deeply disturbing all the cabinets of Europe.

I found the prince a very superior man to the character which I had conceived of him. He was frank and free, spoke of the intentions of the Allies in the most open manner; and even censured the errors which they had already committed, with a plainness, which I had not expected to find out of London. He had evidently made himself master of a great variety of knowledge, and possessed the happy but most unusual power of rendering it all applicable to the point in question. My impression of him and his "order," imbibed among the prejudices of England and the libels of France, had been that of frivolity and flutter, an idle life and a stagnant understanding. I never was more surprised at the contrast between this conception, and the animated and accomplished man before me. He seemed to know, not merely the

persons of all the leading men of Europe—which might have naturally been the case with one who had visited every capital—but, to be acquainted with their characters, their abilities, and even their modes of thinking. He seemed to me one, born to rule. It was in later days, that the habits of the voluptuary, of which his peculiar love of dress might have been slightly symptomatic, produced their effect, in enfeebling a mind made for eminence. I saw him afterwards, broken with years and misfortune. But, on this night I could only see a man, on whom the destinies of Europe were rightly reposed. I willingly and sincerely, pay this tribute of honour to his memory.

Among other topics, he spoke with peculiar force, on the necessity of a strong European combination against France; and flatteringly addressed to me a strong panegyric on my country.

"If we can obtain," said he, "the cordial co-operation of the English people, I see no difficulty before us. We already have the Ministry with us; but I know the Englishman's hatred of a foreign war, his horror of public expenditure on continental interests, and his general distrust of the policy of foreign courts. Until we can give the people some evidence, not only that our intentions are sincere, but that our cause is their own, we shall never have the nation on our side."

My remark was, "that the chief difficulty with the nation would be, to convince them that the Allied Powers were not influenced by personal motives." Adding, that "the seizure of territory, while the

French remained in their defenceless state, would probably excite strong public displeasure in England;" and plainly pronouncing, "that the only thing which could engage the public spirit in the war, would be a conviction of its absolute justice and stern necessity."

The conversation was interrupted by the arrival of a staff officer with despatches from Berlin. A number of papers were laid on the table, and handed over to Vornhorst and Guiscard to read. They proved to be chiefly notes and orders relative to the advance of the army. One paper, however, the duke read with evident interest, and marked with his pencil down the margin.

"I am delighted," said he, "that this paper has reached us at last. M. Marston will now see, what my real advice has been from the beginning. The French journals attacked me furiously, for the declaration issued at our entrance on the frontier. The journals of England partly echoed the French, and I am held up to the world as the author of the *Declaration of Pilnitz*.—This paper, which M. Marston will do me the honour to send at daybreak to his court by a special messenger; will clear my character with his countrymen at once — with the rest of Europe, I am content to wait a little longer."

He then read the paper in his hand; it was a long and striking protest against the idea of partitioning France, or of having any other intention in the movement of the troops, than the security of the French throne. This document had been sent to the Council at Berlin, and been returned by them,

for revision by the duke, and the softening of its rather uncourtly decisiveness of expression.—It stated, that even the conquest of France, if it could be effected, must be wholly useless, without the conciliation of the people: that it must be at all times insecure, that it never could be complete, and that even the attempt might rouse this powerful population to feel its own force, and turn its vast resources to war. The first measure ought, therefore, to be an address to the nation, pronouncing in the clearest language, an utter abjuration of all local seizure."

The paper thus returned, and containing the observations of the party, was given to Vornhorst, to be copied. "And now," said the duke, "gentlemen, I think we may retire for the night;—we have but three hours, until the march in the morning."

I made some general remark, on the "obligations which Europe must owe to a sovereign prince, exposing himself to such labours, honourable as they were."

"No," he smilingly replied; "they are part of *our* office, the routine of the life of princes, the vocation of men born for the public, and living for the public alone. The prince must be a soldier, and the soldier must make the camp his home, and the palace only his sojourn. It is his fortune, perhaps his misfortune, that but one profession in life is left open to him, whether it be the bent of his temperament or not—while other men may follow their tastes in their pursuits, serve their fellow-men in a hundred different ways, and raise a bloodless reputation among mankind.—And now, good night. To-morrow, at five,

the *advance* moves. At six, I shall be on horseback, and then—Well! what matter for the *then?* We shall sleep at least *to-night;*—and so, farewell."

At daybreak, the bustle of the camp awoke me. I rose hastily, mounted my horse, and spurred to the rendezvous of the general staff. Nothing could be more animated than the scene before me, and which spread to the utmost reach of view. The advance of the combined forces had moved at early dawn, and its columns were seen far away, ascending the sides of a hilly range, by different routes, sometimes penetrating through the forest, and everywhere catching the lights of a brilliant rising sun on their plumes and arms. The sound of their trumpets and bands was heard, from time to time, enriched by the distance, and coming on the fresh morning breeze, with something of its freshness, to the ear and the mind. The troops now passing under the knoll, on which the commander-in-chief and his staff had taken their stand, were the main body, and were Austrian—fine-looking battalions, superbly uniformed, and covered with military decorations, fruits of the late Turkish campaigns, the picked troops of an empire of thirty millions of men. Nothing could be more brilliant, novel, or picturesque, than the display of this admirable force, as it moved in front of the rising ground on which our *cortége* stood.

"You will now see," said Vornhorst, who sat curbing, with no slight difficulty, his fiery Ukraine charger, at my side, "the troops, of countries, of which Europe, in general, knows no more than of the tribes of the new world. The Austrian sceptre

brings into the field all the barbaric arms and costumes of the border land of Christendom and the Turk."

Vornhorst, familiar with every service of the continent, was a capital cicerone, and I listened with strong interest as he pronounced the names, and gave little characteristic anecdotes, of the gallant regiments that successively wheeled at the foot of the slope—the Archducal grenadiers—the Eugene battalion, which had won their horse-tails at the passage of the Danube—the Lichtensteins, who had stormed Belgrade—the Imperial Guard, a magnificent corps, who had led the last assault on the Grand Vizier's lines, and finished the war. The light infantry of Maria Theresa, and the Hungarian grenadiers and cuirassiers, a mass of steel and gold, closed the march of the main body. Nothing could be more magnificent. And all this was done under the perpetual peal of trumpets, and the thunder of drums and gongs, that seemed absolutely to shake the air. It was completely the Miltonic march, and harmony—

"Sonorous metal blowing martial sounds."

But I was to witness a still more spirit-stirring scene.

The trampling of a multitude of horse, and the tossing of lances and banners in the distance, suddenly turned all eyes in their direction.

"Now, prepare," said the Count, "for a sight, perhaps not altogether so soldierlike, but fully as much to my taste, as the buff-belt and grenadiers'-cap

formality of the line. You shall see the Austrian flankers—every corps equipped after its native fashion. And, whatever our martinets may say, there is nothing that gives such spirits to the soldier, as equipping him according to the style of his own country. My early service was in Transylvania; and if I were to choose troops for a desperate service, I say—give me the man of the hill, or the man of the forest, exactly in the coat of the chamois-shooter, or the wolf-hunter."

He had scarcely pointed my attention to the movement, when the whole body of the rear-guard was in full and rapid advance. The plain was literally covered with those irregulars, who swept on like a surge; or rather, from the diversity of their colours, and the vast half-circle which they formed on the ground, a living rainbow. Part were infantry and part cavalry, but they were so intermingled, and the motion of all was so rapid, that it was difficult to mark the distinction. From my recollection of the History of the Seven Years' War, I felt a double interest in the sight of the different castes and classes of service, which I had hitherto known only by name. Thus passed before me—the famous Croatian companies—the Pandours, together forming the finest outpost troops of the army—the free companies of the Tyrol, the first marksmen of the empire, a fine athletic race, with the eagle's feather in their broad hats, and the sinewy step of the mountaineer—the lancers of the Bannat, first-rate vedettes,—an Albanian division, which had taken service with Austria, on the close of the war; and, independently of all

name and order, a cloud of wild cavalry, Turk, Christian, and barbarian, who followed the campaign for its chances, and galloped, sported, and charged each other, like the Arabs of the desert.

The late triumphs of the Imperial arms in Turkey had even enhanced the customary display, and the standards of the cavalry, and colours of the battalions, were stiff with the embroidered titles of captured fortresses and conquered fields. Turkish instruments of music figured among the troops, and the captive horse-tails were conspicuous in more than one corps, which had plucked down the pride of the Moslem. The richness and variety of this extraordinary spectacle struck me as so perfectly Oriental, that I might have imagined myself suddenly transferred to Asia, and looked for the pasha and his spahis; or even for the rajah, his elephants, and his turbaned spearmen. Unfortunately, for the display, and not less for the efficiency of the service, all this gay splendour has long since been changed. The Croats are now regulars, and all the rest have followed their example.

My admiration was so loud, that it caught the ear of the duke. He turned his quick countenance on me, and said—"Tell our friends at home, M. Marston, what you have seen to-day. I presume you know that Maria Theresa was a first-rate soldier; or, at least, she had the happy art of finding them. You may see Laudohn's hand in her battalions.—As for the light troops, Europe can show nothing superior in their kind. Trenk's Pandours, and Nadasti's hussars, were worth an army to Austria, from the first Silesian war down to the last shot fired in Germany.

But follow me, and you shall see the work of another great master."

We spurred across the plain to the mouth of a deep, wooded defile, through which the Prussian grand *corps d'armée* were advancing. The brigades which now met our view, were evidently of a different character from the Austrian; their uniforms, of the utmost simplicity; their march utterly silent; the heads of the columns observing their distances with such accuracy, that, on a signal, they could have been instantly formed in order of battle; every movement of the main body simply directed by a flag carried from hill to hill, and the battalion movements marked by the mere waving of a sword. Even their military music was of a peculiar soft and subdued character. On my observing this to Vornhorst, his reply was—"This was one of the favourite points of the great Frederick. 'I hate drums in the march,' said the king, 'they do nothing but confuse the step. Every one knows that the beat at the head of the column takes time to reach the rear. Besides, the drum deafens the ear. Keep it, therefore, for the battle, when, the more noise the better.' He also placed the band in the centre of the column. 'If they are fond of music,' said he, 'why should not every man have his share?'"

The steady advance, the solid force, and the sweet harmony, almost realized the noble poetic conception—

> "Anon they move
> In perfect phalanx, to the Dorian mood
> Of flutes and soft recorders, such as raised

To heights of noblest temper heroes old
Arming to battle ; and instead of rage,
Deliberate valour breathed, firm and unmoved
With dread of death, to flight or foul retreat."

True, they wanted the picturesque splendours of ancient warfare. The "ten thousand banners," with "orient colours waving;" the "forest huge of spears," the "thronging helms," and "serried shields, in thick array of depth immeasurable." But, if the bayonet, the lance, and even the cannon, offered less to the eye, the true source of the grandeur of war was there — the power, the tremendous impulse, the *materiel* of those shocks which convulse nations,—the marshalled strength, fierce science, and stern will, before which the works of man perish, like chaff before the wind, and the glory of nations vanishes like a shade.

While the rear-guard were defiling before the duke and his staff, a courier brought despatches.

"Gentlemen," said the duke, after glancing at one of the papers, "the army of the Prince de Condé is in march, to join us. They have already reached this neighbourhood. We must now lose no time.— M. Marston, you will report to your Government what you have seen to-day. We *are* in march for Paris."

Vornhorst and Guiscard were now summoned to the side of the duke; a spot was found, where we might shelter ourselves from the overpowering blaze of the sun; the successive despatches were opened; a large map of the routes from Champagne to the capital was laid on the ground; and we dismounted,

and, sitting together, like old comrades, held our hurried council of war.

"I can make but little of my French correspondents in general," said the duke, after perusing a long letter, "but M. le Duc writes like Cagliostro. He has evidently some prodigious secret, which he is determined to envelope in still deeper secrecy.—He tells me that La Fayette has fled; but when, where, or for what purpose, is all equally an enigma.—In one sentence of his letter he would persuade me, that all France is disorganized, and in the next, that it is more resolved to resist than ever.—Paris is prepared to rise at the first sight of the white flag, and Paris is sending out six thousand men every three hours to join the republican force in the field.—Paris is in despair. Paris is in exultation.—How am I to understand all this? Even in his postscript, he tells me, in one breath, that the whole of the strong places in our front are filled with national guards, and that no less than seven corps of troops of the line are prepared to fight us in the plains of Champagne,—and then, that we have only to push on, to take the towns—charge the troops of the line, to see them disperse—and advance within ten leagues of Paris, to extinguish the rebellion, set the royal family free, and restore the monarchy."

The mysterious letter was handed round our circle in succession, and seemed equally beyond the comprehension of all. Yet there was truth in it, after all. We had yet to learn the temperament of a capital, where every half-hour produced a total change of the popular mind. The letter, fantastically

expressed as it was, conveyed the condition of the hour. The picture was true, but the countenance changed every moment. The artist might as well have given the forms of a cloud.

I had now entered on a course of adventure, the most exciting of all others, and at the most exciting time of life. All the world round me was in a state of excitement. Every nation of Europe was throwing open its armoury, and preparing its weapons for the field. The troops invading France were palpably no more than the advanced guards of Prussia and Austria. Even in all my inexperience, I foresaw, that the war would differ from all the past; that it would be, not a war of tactics, but a war of opinion; that not armies, but the people marshalled into hosts, would be ultimately the deciders of the victory; and that, on whichever side the popular feeling was the more serious, persevering, and intense, there the triumph would be gained. I must still confess, however, in disparagement to my military sagacity, that I was totally unprepared for the gallant resistance of the French recruits.—"What can they do without officers?—(ten thousand of whom had been noblesse, and were now emigrants.) What can they do without a commissariat? what can they do without pay? and who is to pay them, in a bankrupt nation?" Such were the constant topics at head-quarters—"We were marching to an assured victory. France was at an end. We should remodel the Government, renew the Monarchy, and teach the *sans culottes* the hazard of trying the trade of politicians."

There was but one man in the camp, who did not coincide in those glittering visions. Let me once more do justice to a prince, whose character has been affected only by the caprices of fortune. The Duke of Brunswick's language to me, as we saw the Tricolor waving on the walls of Longwy, the first fortress which lay in our road, was—"Sir, your court must not be deceived. We shall probably take this town, and defeat the covering army; but, up to this moment, we have not been joined by a single peasant. — The population are against us. This is not like a German war; it is more like yours in America. I have but one hundred and twenty thousand men, against twenty-five millions." To my remark, "that there might be a large body of concealed loyalty in France, which only waited the advance of the Allies to declare itself," his calm and grave reply was:—"That I must not suffer my Government to suppose him capable of abandoning the royal cause, while there was hope in military means.—That it was his determination to hazard all things, rather than chill the coalition. But this let me impress upon your ministry," said he, with his keen eye turned full on me,—"that if intrigue in the German cabinets, or tardiness on the part of yours, shall be suffered to impede my progress, all is at an end.—I know the French; if we pause, they will pour on.—If we do not reach Paris, we must prepare to defend Berlin and Vienna.—If the war is not ended within a month, it may last for these twenty years."

The commander-in-chief was true to his word.

He lost no time. Before night our batteries were in full play upon the bastions of Longwy; and as our tents had not yet overtaken us, I lay down under a vineyard-shed in a circle of the staff, with my cloak for my pillow, listening to the roar of our artillery; until it mingled with my dreams.

CHAPTER XV.

" A crimson cloud it spreads and glows,
But shall return, to whence it rose.
When 'tis full, 'twill burst asunder.
Never yet was heard such thunder,
Never yet was seen such lightning
As shall then the world be brightening ;
Like the wormwood star, foretold
By the sainted seer, of old,
Showering down a fiery flood,
Turning rivers into blood."

BYRON.

WE were on horseback an hour before daybreak, and the cannonade still continued heavy. It was actively returned, and the ramparts were a circuit of fire. To wait for the slow approaches of a formal siege, was out of the question. Intelligence had reached us, that the scattered French armies, having now ascertained the point at which the burst over the frontier was to be made ; had suddenly combined, and taken a strong position, directly in our way to the capital. A protracted siege would raise the country in our rear, and, thus placed between two fires, the grand army might find itself paralyzed, at

the first step of the campaign.—The place must be battered until a breach was made, and then stormed *à la Turque.* Our anxiety during the day was indescribable. With our telescopes constantly in our hands, we watched the effect of every discharge; we galloped from hill to hill with the impatience of the sharers in actual combat; and every eye and tongue was busy in calculating the distances, the power of the guns, and the time which the crumbling works would take, to fill up the ditch. Towards evening, the reports of the engineers announced, that a practicable breach was made, and three battalions of Austrian grenadiers, and as many of Prussians, were ordered under arms, for the assault. To make this gallant enterprize more conspicuous, the whole army was formed in columns, and marched to the heights, which commanded a view of the fortress. The fire from our batteries now became a continued roar; and the guns of Longwy, whose fire had slackened during the day, answered them with an equal thunder; the space between was soon covered with smoke, and when the battalions of grenadiers moved down the hill-side, and plunged into the valley, they looked like masses of men disappearing into the depths of ocean. The anxiety now grew intense. I hardly breathed. For the time I had a mingled sensation of delight, eagerness, and yet of uncertainty, to which nothing that I had ever felt before was comparable. I longed to follow those brave men to the assault; and probably would have made some such extravagant blunder, but for seeing Vornhorst's broad visage turned on me with a look of that quiet

ridicule, which, of all things on earth, soonest brings a man to his senses. "My good friend," said he, "however fine this affair may be, live in hope of seeing something finer. Never be shot at Longwy, when you may have a chance of scaling the walls of Paris. I have made a vow, never to be hanged in the beginning of a revolution, nor to be shot in the beginning of a war. But come, the duke is beckoning to us. Let us follow him."

We saw the general and his staff galloping from the ground, where he had remained from the beginning of the assault, to a height still more exposed, and where the balls from the fortress were tearing up the soil. From this spot, a large body of troops were seen sallying from the fortress, and plunging into the valley. The result of this powerful sortie was soon heard, in the heavier volleys of musketry, and the shouts of the troops, on both sides. Vornhorst now received a note from the chief of the staff; which produced its effect, in the burst of a squadron of Prussian cavalry on the flank of the enemy's column. In a few minutes the column was broken, and we saw its wrecks swept along the side of the hill. An universal shout was sent up from the army; and our next sight was the ascent of the Austrian and Prussian standards, gradually rising through the smoke, and making their way towards the glacis. They had just reached the foot of the breach, when the fire of the town suddenly ceased. A white flag waved on the rampart, and the drums of the garrison beat the *chamade*. Longwy had surrendered!

All now was triumph and congratulation. We

flocked round the duke, and hailed his first conquest, as a promise of continued success. He was in high spirits at an achievement, which was so important to the national impression of his talents and resources. The sortie of the garrison had given the capture an *éclat*, which could not have been obtained by the mere surrender of a strong place. But, the most important point of all was, its surrender *before* the assault.—"The sight of our troops is enough," was the universal conclusion. "If the fortified barrier of France cannot resist, what will be done by troops as raw as peasants, and officers as raw as their troops?" The capitulation was a matter of half an hour, and at night-fall I followed the duke and his escort into the town. It was illuminated by order of the conquerors: and, whether *bongrè* or *malgrè*, it looked showy; we had gazers in abundance, as the dashing staff caracoled their way through the streets. I observed, however, that we had no acclamations. To have hissed us, might be a hazardous experiment, while so many Hulans were galloping through the Grande Rue; but we got no smiles. In the midst of the crowd, I met Vornhorst steering his charger, with no small difficulty, and carrying a packet of notes in his hand. "Go to your quarters, and dress," said my good-humoured friend. "You will have a busy night of it. The duke has invited the French commandant and his officers to dine with him, and we are to have a ball and supper afterwards for the ladies. Lose no time." He left me wondering at the new world into which I had fallen, and strongly doubting that he would be able to fill up his ball-

room. But I was mistaken. The dinner was handsomely attended, and the ball more handsomely still. "Fortune de la guerre," reconciled the gallant captains of the garrison to the change; and they fully enjoyed the contrast between a night on the ramparts, and the hours spent at the Prussian generalissimo's splendidly furnished table. The ball which followed, exhibited a crowd of the *belles* of Longwy, all as happy as dress and dancing could make them. It was a charming episode in the sullen history of campaigning; and before I flung myself on the embroidered sofa of the mayor's drawing-room, where my billet had been given for the night; I was on terms of eternal "friendship" with a whole group of classic beauties—Aspasias, Psyches, and Cleopatras.

But, neither love nor luxury, neither the smiles of the fair *Champagnaises*, nor the delight of treading on the tesselated floors, and feasting on the richness of municipal tables, could now detain us. We were in our saddles by daybreak, and, with horses that outstripped the wind, with hearts light as air, and with prospects of endless victory and honours innumerable before us, we galloped along; preceded, surrounded, and followed by the most showy squadrons that ever wore lace and feathers. The delight of this period was indescribable. It was to me a new birth of faculties, that resembled a new sense of being, a buoyant and elastic lightness of feelings and frame. —The pure air; the perpetual change of scene; the novelty of the landscape; the restless and vivid variety of events, and those too of the most powerful and comprehensive nature; the superb display of the

finest army that the Continent had sent to war, for the last hundred years; and all this excitement and enjoyment, with an unrivalled vista of conquest in the horizon, a triumphal march through the provinces, to be consummated by the peace of Europe in Paris; filled even my vexed and wearied spirit with new life. If I am right in my theory—that the mind reaches stages of its growth, with still more distinctness than the frame, this was one of them. I was conscious, from this time, of a more matured view of human being, of a clearer knowledge of its impulses, of a more vigorous, firm, and enlarged capacity for dealing with the real concerns of life.—But, I still loved; and, strange, hopeless, and bewildering as that passion was, in the breast of one who seemed destined to meet all the diversities of fortune; it remained without relief, or relaxation, through all.—It was the vein of gold, or perhaps the stream of fire, beneath the soil; inaccessible to the power of change on the surface, while that surface was undergoing every impulse and influence of art and nature.

The army now advanced unopposed. Still, we received neither cheers nor reinforcements from the population. But, we had now begun to be careless on the topic. The intelligence from Paris was favourable in all the leading points.—The king was resuming his popularity, though still a prisoner. The Jacobins were exhibiting signs of terror, though still masters of every thing. The recruits were running away, though the decree for the general rising of the country was still arming the people. The news was exactly of that checkered order which was calcu-

lated to put us all in the highest spirits. The submission of Paris, at least until we were its conquerors, would have deprived us of a triumph on the spot; and the proclamation of a general peace would have been received, as the command for a general mourning.

The duke was in great animation, and he talked to every one round him, as we rode along; with more than princely condescension. He was easy, familiar, and flushed with approaching victory—"We have now," said he, "broken through the 'iron barrier,' the pride of Vauban, and the boast of France for these hundred years.—To-morrow Verdun will fall.—The commandant of Thionville, in desperation at the certainty of our taking the town by assault, has shot himself, and the keys are on their way to me. Nothing but villages now lie in our road, and once past those heights," he pointed to a range of woody hills on the far horizon, "and we shall send our light troops *en promenade* to Paris." We all responded, in all ways of congratulation.

"Apropos," said the duke, "M. Marston, you have been later in Paris than any of us. What can you tell us of this M. Dumourier, who, I see from my letters, is appointed to the forlorn hope of France; the command of the broken armies of La Fayette and Luckner?"

My answer was briefly a hope, that the new general would be as much overmatched by the duke's fortunes in the field, as he had been by party in the capital.—"Still, he seemed to me a clever, and even a remarkable man, however inexperienced as a soldier."

"If he is the officer of that name who served in

the last French war, he is an old acquaintance of mine," observed the duke. "I remember him perfectly. He was then a mere boy, who, in a rash skirmish with some of our hussars, was wounded severely and taken prisoner. But, as I learned that he was the son of a French *littérateur* of some eminence whom I had met in Paris, and as I had conceived a favourable opinion of the young soldier's gallantry, I gave him his parole and sent him back to his family, who, I think, were Provençals. He was unquestionably spirited and intelligent, and with experience might make either minister or general; but as he has begun by failure in the one capacity, it will be our business to show him that he may find success equally difficult in another.—At all events, we have nothing but this minister-general between us and Nôtre-Dame.—He has taken up a position on the Argonne ridge in our front. To force it will be but an affair of three hours. Adieu, gentlemen." He put spurs to his horse, and galloped to one of the columns which approached, with trumpets sounding, and bearing the captured banner of the Citadel of Longwy.

The world was now before us, and we enjoyed it to the full. Vornhorst and I were inseparable, and we feasted on the gaiety and the oddity of the various characters, which campaigning developes, more than any other mode of existence. The simple meal, the noon-rest under a tree, the songs of our troopers, the dance in the villages; as soon as the peasantry had discovered that we did not eat women and children—even the consciousness of a life wholly without care,

formed a delightful state of being. "If this is the life of the Arab," I was often ready to exclaim, "what folly would it be in him, to leave the wilderness!—If the Esquimaux can sleep through one half of the year, and revel through the other, is he not the true philosopher, in the midst of his frost and snow?" Guiscard, who sometimes joined our party, now and then smiled at our unripe conceptions of the nature of things. But we laughed at his gravity, and he returned to his tent, to pore over the mysteries of that diplomacy, which evidently thickened on him hour by hour. I still recollect his ominous expression—"My friends, you think that the battle is to be fought in front: I can assure you that a much more severe battle is to be fought in the rear. Argonne will be more easily mastered, than the King's closet, and the Aulic counsel." We soon had good reason to believe the oracle.

One morning as, with half a dozen hussars, I was ranging the thickets on the flank of the advance, with the spirit of an English fox-hunter; on reaching a rising ground, I saw, some miles off, a party of horsemen making their way at full speed across the country. The perfect level of the plains, particularly in Champagne, makes the ground as open as a race-course. I called in my hussars, and we galloped forward to intercept them. On seeing us, they slackened their speed, and were evidently in consultation. At length the sight of our uniforms re-assured them, and one of their number rode up to us. To our infinite surprise, he announced that "General La Fayette desired to be led to the head-quarters." I now saw

this memorable man for the first time, and was busy, in my usual style, in looking for the hero, or the revolutionist, in his physiognomy. I was disappointed in both. I saw a quiet visage, and a figure of moderate size, rather *enbonpoint*, and altogether the reverse of that fire-eyed and lean-countenanced "Cassius," which I had pictured in my imagination. But his manners perplexed me as much as his features. They were calm, easy, and almost frank. It was impossible to recognize the Frenchman in him, except by his language; and he was the last man in whom I could ever have detected that toy of the theatre, the "French *marquis*." His manners were English; and I had a fellow-feeling for him, even in our short ride to the camp; and congratulated myself on being thrown into the intercourse of one, who had played so conspicuous a part in the most conspicuous scene of our day.

But, on his introduction to the duke, my ardour received a sudden chill. I saw instantly, by the utter absence of all cordiality in his reception, that the French fugitive had taken a dangerous step; and that his Parisian ill fortune had deprived his retreat of all merit in the eyes of the commander-in-chief. As I passed the lines, I saw La Fayette in charge of a troop of Hulans of the Guard, and found the duke pacing uneasily in front of the tent. He called me towards him.

"M. Marston," said he, with a vexed manner, "your capture of this morning has added to our perplexities. You acted zealously, and with the spirit that distinguishes your nation; but I heartily wish

that M. La Fayette had taken any other direction than towards us. His fall has been contemplated for some time, and even the possibility of his being arrested by some of our parties. I have received a communication from the Allied cabinets on the contingency; and the question now is, how to execute my orders without public weakness, or personal severity."

I proposed to escort him, while we were on the march, and to pledge myself for his honour, when we arrived at quarters.

"Handsomely offered," was the reply. "But my duty, in the first instance, prohibits his remaining in the camp; and in the next, my feelings for himself would spare a man who has commanded the enemy's troops, the sight of that actual collision which must immediately take place.—We attack the defiles of the Argonne to-morrow."

He entered the tent, wrote a few lines, and returned with them to me.

"M. La Fayette must consider himself as a prisoner; but, as my wish is to treat him with respect, I must beg of you, M. Marston, to take charge of him, for the time.—Your offer has relieved me from an embarrassment; and I shall take care to make honourable mention of your conduct in this instance, as in all others, to both the courts of Berlin and St. James's. But, the marquis must be sent to Berlin, and I must request, that you will be ready to set out with him this evening."

The sound was a thunder-stroke. "This evening!" when the decisive action of the war was to be fought

next morning. "To Berlin!" when all my gallant friends were to be on the march to Paris. I retracted my offer at once. But the prince, not accustomed to be resisted, held his purpose firmly; representing that, as the French general was actually *my* prisoner, and as *my* court was equally interested with those of the Allied powers, in preventing his return, "it was my duty, as her commissioner, to see that the measure was effectively performed." Still, the appearance of leaving the army, on the very eve of important service, was not to be argued, or even commanded, away. The duke was equally inflexible, though his sentences were perhaps shorter than mine; and I finally left his presence, declaring,—that if the request were persisted in, I should throw up my commission at once, volunteer as a common trooper into the first squadron which would admit me, and then,—his highness might, of course, order me wherever he pleased."

A stately smile was the only answer to this tirade. I bowed, and retired.

Within a hundred yards, I met my two friends, Vornhorst and Guiscard, and poured out my whole catalogue of wrongs at once. Vornhorst shared in my indignation, fiercely pulled his thick moustaches, and muttered some phrases about "oppression," "martinetism," and other dangerous topics, which fortunately were scattered into air. Guiscard neither raged nor smiled, but walked into the ducal tent. After a few minutes, he returned. "You have offended the duke desperately," said he.—"And as a sovereign prince, I dare say, that banishment from

his territories for life would be the least reparation; but as a general, he thinks, that we cannot have too many good troops, and your proposal to take a Hulan's lance and pistol in hand, is irresistible. In short, he receives you as a volunteer into his own hussars, and as you are henceforth at his disposal, he orders" ——My tormentor here made a malicious pause, which threw me into a fever. I gazed on his countenance, to anticipate his mission. It wore the same deep and moveless expression. "His highness orders, that you shall escort, with a squadron, General La Fayette, to the chateau, our late head-quarters; there deliver over the Frenchman to an officer of the staff, who will be in readiness to escort him further; and, in the mean time, if the very fiery and independent M. Marston should have no objection to travel at night; he may return, and be in time for whatever is to be done here to-morrow."

"Bravo, bravo!" exclaimed good-natured Vornhorst. "You are the first of negotiators!"

"No," was the quiet reply. "I pretend to nothing more, than the art of being a good listener. I merely waited, until the duke had spoken his will, and then interposed my suggestion. It was adopted at once; and now, our young friend has only to ride hard to-night, and come to shade his brow with a share of any laurels which we may pluck in the forest of Argonne, in the next twenty-four hours."

I was enraptured. The communication was made, but in the most courteous manner, to the marquis. He had at once perceived the difficulties of his position; and was glad to leave them behind as far as possible.

Our escort mounted, and within a few minutes, we were in full gallop over the fruitful levels of Champagne.

To speed of this order, time and space were of little importance; and with the rapidity of a flock of falcons, we reached, by nightfall, the foot of the noble hill, on which, embosomed in the most famous vineyards of the wine country, stood the chateau. It was blazing with lights, and had evidently lost nothing of its population by the change of head-quarters. We were soon brought to a stand by a French challenge; and found, that we were no longer among the jovial Jägers of Deutchland. We had fallen in with the advanced corps of the Emigrant army, under the command of the Prince of Condé.

But, here was a new dilemma. Our prisoner's was perhaps the most startling name, which could have been pronounced among those high-blooded and headlong men. The army was composed almost wholly of the *noblesse;* and La Fayette, under all the circumstances of births, sentiments, and services, had been the constant theme of their indignation. The champion of the American republic, the leader of the Parisian movement, the commandant of the National Guard, the chief of the rebel army in the field—all this was terribly against him. Even the knowledge of his fall had not appeased their resentment; and the additional knowledge that he was within their hands, might have only produced some unfortunate display, of what the philosopher calls "wild justice." In this difficulty, while the officer of the patrol was on his way to the chateau to an-

nounce our coming, I consulted the captain of my escort. But, though a capital *sabreur*, he was evidently not made to solve questions in diplomacy. After various grimaces of thinking, and even taking the meershaum from his mouth, I was thrown on my own resources. My application to the captive general was equally fruitless: it was answered with the composure of one prepared for all consequences, but it amounted simply to—"Do just as you please."

Yet, no time was to be lost; leaving the escort to await my return, I rode up the hill alone, and desired an interview with the officer in command of the division. Fortunately I found him one of my gayest Parisian companions, now transformed into a fierce chevalier, *colonel des chasseurs*, bronzed like an Arab, and moustached like a tiger. I communicated my purpose to him as briefly as possible. His handsome brow instantly clouded, and his fingers instinctively began playing with the hilt of his sabre. If the rencontre could have been arranged on the old terms of man to man, my gallant friend would have undoubtedly made me the bearer of a message on the spot. But, I had come for other objects, and I gradually brought him round; until he allowed that "a prisoner was entitled to respect." The "request of his distinguished and valued friend, M. Marston, dear to him by so many charming recollections of Paris, &c., was much more;" and we finally arranged, that the general should be conveyed unseen, to an apartment in the chateau, while I did him and his "*camarades*" the honour of sharing their supper.

To this I gave the most willing consent; for, a ride of thirty miles had given me the appetite of a hunter.

I was now introduced to a new scene. The room was filled with muskets and knapsacks piled against the walls, and three-fourths of those who sat down were private soldiers. Yet there was scarcely a man among them who did not wear some decoration, and I heard the noblest names of France every where round me. Thus extremes meet: the Faubourg St. Germain had adopted the new order of things, and the very first attempt to retain exclusive rank had brought all to a level. But it was a generous, a graceful, and a gallant level. All was good-humour under their privations, and the fearful chances which awaited them were evidently regarded with a feeling which had all the force of physical courage, without its roughness. I was much struck, too, with the remarkable appearance of the military figures round me. Contrary to our general notions of the foreign noblesse, they exhibited some of the finest-looking men whom I had ever seen. This was, perhaps, in a considerable degree, owing to the military life. In countries where the nobility are destitute of public employment, they naturally degenerate—become victims of the diseases of indolence and profligacy, transmit their decrepitude to their descendants, and make dwarfishness and deformity an inheritance. But, in France, the young noble was destined for soldiership from his cradle. His education partook of the manly preparatives for the soldier's career. The discipline of the service, even in peace, taught

him some superiority to the effeminate habits of mere opulence; and the practical necessity of talents and determination, gave them an importance which powerfully shaped the general character of the class. In England, the struggles for political power, and the distinctions of political fame, invigorate the character of our men of birth. The continual ascent of accomplished minds from the humbler ranks, excites their emulation; and if England may proudly boast of men of intellectual vigour, worthy of rising to the highest rank from the humblest condition; she may, with not less justice, boast of her favourites of fortune, fitted to cope with her favourites of nature.

Among these showy and high-bred soldiers, the hour passed delightfully. Anecdotes of every court of Europe; in which most of them had resided, either as tourists or envoys; piquant tales of the court;—narratives sufficiently contemptuous of the present possessors of power; and *chansons*—some gay, and some touching—made us all forget the flight of time. Among their military choruses, I recollect one, which they sang with singular enthusiasm. It was a species of brief elegy to the memory of Turenne, whom the French soldier still regarded as his tutelar genius. It was said to have been written on the spot, where that great leader fell:—

> " Reçois, O Turenne, où tu perdis la vie,
> Les transports d'un soldat, qui te plaint et t'envie.
> Dans l'Elysée assis, près du chef des Césars,
> Ou dans le ciel, peut-être entre Bellone et Mars.
> Fais-moi te suivre en tout, exauce ma prière;
> Puisse-je ainsi remplir, et finir ma carrière."

The application to the immediate circumstances of those brave gentlemen was painfully direct. What to-morrow might bring forth, was unknown, further than that they would probably soon be engaged with their countrymen; and whether successful or not, it was war against France. But, my intelligence that an action was expected on the next day, awoke the soldier within them again:—the wrongs of their order, the plunders of the ruling faction, their hopeless expatriation, if some daring effort were not made, and the hope of triumphant change from exiles to possessors and conquerors, stirred them all into enthusiasm. —The army of the allies, the enemy's position, the public feeling of Paris, and the hope of sharing in the honours of an engagement, which was to sweep the revolutionary "*canaille*" before the "gentlemen of France," were now the rapid and animating topics. All, now, were ardent, all eloquent; "fortune was at their feet; the only crime was, to doubt"—the only difficulty was, to choose in what shape of splendid vengeance, of matchless retribution, of permanent glory, they should restore the tarnished lustre of the diadem, and raise the insulted name of France to its ancient rank among the monarchies of the world. I never heard among men so many vivid boldnesses of speech, so many deep expressions of the heart, so glowing a display of what the heart may unconsciously treasure, for the period, when some great emotion rouses all its depths, and opens them to the light of day. It was to me a new chapter in the history of man.

END OF VOL. I.

LONDON :
GILBERT & RIVINGTON, PRINTERS,
ST. JOHN'S SQUARE.

PR
4518
C55
M37
1847
v.1

3 1205 02042 7884
UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY
A A 001 396 992 8